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Filipinos asked to register weapons

MANILA, Jan 3. (Agencies): President Corason Aquino swore in nine new cabinet members today and called for teamwork to solve the nation's problems in the wake of last month's bloody coup attempt.

Using emergency powers, Aquino later ordered that all firearms be registered anew.

Meanwhile, opposition Sen. Juan Ponce Enrile denied allegations that he was linked to the Dec 1-9 coup attempt. He called the charges a witchhunt aimed at eliminating Aquino's opponents.

Congress also expanded the powers of a commission investigating the coup attempt, giving it the right, among other things, to look into bank accounts of suspected coup supporters.

A consolidated version of bills from the Senate and House of Representatives creating the commission was passed in both chambers, called into special session by Aquino to approve the legislation.

Sen. Jose Lina, chairman of the Senate negotiators for the final version, said the commission would investigate last month's attempted coup and recommend "measures which will prevent similar attempts at a violent seizure of power."

The military today filed rebellion charges against four officers and 16 soldiers and civilians accused of joining the failed attempt.

Charged by the military judge, the general's office before government prosecutors were Lt. Col. Eduardo Matillano and Rodolfo Tor, Capt. Antonio dela Cruz, Sgt. Bulos, Rolando de Gracia and 15 other individuals.

Only Matillano and De Gracia are in custody. The military has offered rewards of up to \$47,600 for information leading to the capture of 15 coup leaders, including Tor.

The bill gives the commission quasi-judicial powers, including the right to grant immunity from prosecution to witnesses. It protects witnesses against self-incrimination in testimony they are forced to give before the commission.

It also allows the commission to require the monetary board to disclose information or grant authority to examine bank accounts if it has "reasonable ground" to believe the funds were used in the coup attempt.

In ordering new gun registration, Aquino also directed the armed forces to conduct an inventory of all their firearms, explosives, ammunition and other military equipment, including those on loan to civilians.

A law granting the President emergency powers, lasting until July, allows Aquino to issue orders to recover firearms allegedly used in the military rebellion, but Congress has required her to seek court warrants.

The order did not state when the new registration would begin. The Department of National Defence was to draw up guidelines.

The government, private security agencies and civilians held at least 453,300 licensed firearms, and more than 189,000 unlicensed guns were recorded in the first four months of 1989.

(See Page 2)

Weather

CLOUDY weather with moderate southerly wind may freshen at times with a chance of scattered rain.

State of sea: moderate to rough

High water: 4.00 am, 5.00 pm

Low water: 11.00 am, 11.30 pm

Source: S.A.P.

Maximum temperatures recorded:

Kuwait: 17°C 63°F

Amman: 15°C 59°F

Baghdad: 15°C 59°F

Kuala Lumpur: 10°C 50°F

Alaska: 14°C 57°F

Minimum temperatures expected:

Kuwait: 17°C 63°F

Amman: 15°C 59°F

Baghdad: 15°C 59°F

Kuala Lumpur: 10°C 50°F

Alaska: 14°C 57°F

Minimum humidity recorded:

Kuwait: 52 per cent

Amman: 48 per cent

Baghdad: 60 per cent

Unify Azerbaijan with Iran: rioters

Kremlin sends troops to stop rampage

MOSCOW, Jan 3. (Agencies): The government rushed more border troops to the southern republic of Azerbaijan today to try to stop a rampage by thousands of people along the boundary with Iran, a newspaper reported.

The government daily Izvestia said more than 4,000 people tore down guard towers and destroyed electronic alarms along the border. The official Soviet news agency said one person had died.

The rioters want southern Azerbaijan to be unified with northern

Iran and have threatened to remove all barriers at the border unless authorities remove them, the newspaper reported.

Azerbaijanis have said they merely want the right to freely visit friends and relatives on the other side of the border.

The Tass news agency said today one person was killed in a clash among the protesters. Border guards did not use their weapons and none of them was hurt. The dispatch did not say how many protesters were injured.

Izvestia estimated the damage at more than five million roubles (\$8.2 million).

Soviet envoy asked to leave

Aoun faces isolation

BEIRUT, Jan 3. (UPI): Diplomatic sources in East Beirut said today that Gen. Michel Aoun was facing growing isolation at the diplomatic level and mounting political opposition inside the Christian enclave.

A diplomatic source, who requested anonymity, said Aoun's call on the Soviet ambassador to leave Lebanon was "a sign of political bankruptcy."

Aoun yesterday accused the Soviet ambassador to Lebanon, Vassili Kolotoucha, of "diplomatic insolence" and asked him to leave the country because of his recent remarks supporting President Elias Hiriawi's right to use the Syrian Army to subdue Aoun.

Kolotoucha said last Saturday after meeting with Hiriawi that an Arab League-sponsored peace plan for Lebanon endorsed by Lebanese legislatures in Taif, Saudi Arabia, Oct 22 will be carried out completely.

Asked what would be the attitude of the Soviet Union if Hiriawi asked for Syrian military assistance to extend state sovereignty on all Lebanese territory, Kolotoucha said: "This is the right of the Lebanese legitimacy." (See Page 7)

Weizman claims 80pc victory

OCCUPIED Jerusalem, Jan 3. (Reuters): Israeli Science Minister Ezer Weizman left today for an official visit to the Soviet Union after surviving a showdown over charges that he met a PLO official and co-operated with Israel's most dangerous enemies.

Weizman, who flew first to Vienna, claimed victory after the two-day crisis ended in a compromise that left him demoted in the government, led by rightist Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir.

"In a compromise, there is never 100 per cent," the dovish Labour Party minister told Israeli television late on Tuesday.

Israeli media quoted members of Shamir's Likud Party as criticising the premier for agreeing to the compromise. Weizman was dismissed from the policy-making inner cabinet but allowed to remain science minister.

Weizman's Soviet visit, only the second by an Israeli minister since Moscow severed relations over the 1967 Middle East war, sparked controversy during the government crisis.

Shamir's office hinted that Weizman, a former defence minister and air force chief, planned to meet a Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) official in Moscow.

The Israeli newspaper Hada shot named the official as Mahmud Abbas, a member of the PLO's Executive Committee.

Weizman denied the report and promised Shamir he would meet no PLO members during his eight-day trip to Moscow and Leningrad.

Meanwhile, the reputed mid-dleman between Weizman and PLO has refused to confirm that role, but said he would continue efforts to promote Arab-Israeli peace, a Jordanian newspaper reported today.

"I refused to confirm or deny reports that I am the contact between the PLO and Weizman," Ahmad Tibi told the Jordan Times.

Israeli newspapers said today that intelligence officials were angered at the way Shamir used classified information to expose a cabinet minister's contacts with the PLO.

The reports suggested it may have harmed state security and affected the information-gathering capabilities of the Mossad and Shin Bet, Israel's external and internal intelligence agencies.

Avi Pazner, a Shamir spokesman, said the reports were "groundless" and that the prime minister "did not make any public use of secret material."

In fact, Pazner said, Shamir withheld secret material so as not to jeopardize intelligence methods and sources.



Hamas leader on trial

Sheikh Ahmed Yassin, 54, the paralysed leader of the Palestinian Islamic resistance movement Hamas, is wheeled into Gaza military court. Yassin was read a 15-count indictment charging him with recruiting the killers of two Israeli soldiers and ordering the deaths of suspected Palestinian collaborators. (Reuters wirephoto)

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Israeli child trade

Four orthodox Jews held

OCCUPIED Jerusalem, Jan 3. (AP): Four religious Israelis have been detained on suspicion of conspiring to kidnap dozens of children and illegally hand them over for adoption in Israel and the United States, a police spokesman said today.

Israeli news reports said the four people detained were orthodox Jews suspected of kidnapping children on religious motives, sometimes from mixed Jewish-Arab marriages. The kidnapping victims were often babies and toddlers, the Haaretz daily said.

Roni Yeshayahu, a spokesman for national police, said the suspects, three men and a woman, were taken for questioning yesterday and that the men were still in custody today.

The woman, who is suspected of selling children overseas, was put under house arrest today because of an illness, Israel radio said.

Yeshayahu said the suspects "are suspected of violations linked to the illegal adoption of children, conspiracy to kidnap children from their adoptive parents, and suspicion of transferring children abroad illegally." He refused to give details.

40 feared dead as Pakistani bridge collapses

LAHORE, Jan 3. (AP): About 40 people may have drowned when a bridge collapsed in northeastern Pakistan, plunging workmen and onlookers into a swift canal, officials said today.

Fog hampered attempts to rescue survivors and recover bodies after the accident occurred last night near the village of Hafizabad, about 50 miles (80 kilometres) northeast of Lahore, police said.

Fog was still thick at daybreak as police abandoned a search along the banks and began straining nets downstream.

"We are unable to do what we want to do because of the fog," said a district police official, speaking on the usual condition of anonymity.

Witnesses said that seven workmen were dismantling the century-old, 70-foot (21-metre) long bridge while several onlookers huddled at the ends.

It gave way on one side, tossing one workman and dozens of other people about 16 feet (5 metres) into the swift lower Chenab canal, they said.

The nearby hospital at Hafizabad, about 4 miles (6 km) from the site of the accident, where the bodies were being brought, said it had received 40 bodies by noon today.

Attempt on life

Unknown assailants raked the home of the Lebanese Christian military police chief with machine gun fire before dawn yesterday in an assassination attempt that killed at least five people, police said.

Lt Col Adel Sassin escaped unhurt as his guards battled with the attackers in the mountain resort town of Beit Meri in the Christian enclave, a police spokesman said.

Picture shows a man and his wife, holding AK-47 rifles, shout in support of Amal militia battling Hezbollah. (Reuters wirephoto)

(See Page 7)

Detainees in Punjab may be freed

No to plebiscite

GUWAHATI, India, Jan 3. (Reuters): Prime Minister Vishwanath Singh said today India would not agree to a United Nations-mandated plebiscite on Kashmir, where militants are waging a campaign for independence.

"Kashmir is very much an integral part of India and one should never attempt to reopen history," he told reporters in Guwahati, capital of India's northeastern Assam state, when asked if he would consider a plebiscite.

The United Nations, which has had a military observer group in Kashmir since 1948, maintains India should hold a referendum to determine whether Kashmiris want to be independent, remain within India or become part of Pakistan.

The Kashmir government last month freed five jailed separatist militants in exchange for the kidnapped daughter of Indian Home Minister Mufti Muhammad Sayeed.

Up to 1,500 people detained in India during a three-year crackdown on Sikh militancy may be released soon as a peace gesture, officials said today.

Officials in the northern state of Punjab said they were drawing up a list of up to 1,500 detainees, held for offences such as sheltering militants, who would be eligible for release.

A Home (interior) Ministry spokesman in New Delhi said it was possible detainees on the list would be released soon.

About 12,000 people had been detained in Punjab under anti-terrorist laws, according to official figures.

India's new government said today it was inviting all political parties, including Sikh hardliners, to a public meeting in Punjab on January 11 as part of efforts to end separatist strife.

It is seeking to win over public opinion in the state after the previous government's policy of tough security force action failed to halt daily killings.

Political sources in New Delhi said the minority government of Prime Minister Vishwanath Pratap Singh did not want to commit itself to major concessions without some guarantees that pressure would be put on the militants to end the violence.

Singh's government is dependent on the parliamentary support of the Hindu Bharatiya Janata Party. Many victims of Sikh militant violence in Punjab have been Hindus.

Singh has ruled out conceding to demands by the militants for an independent Sikh homeland, which they call Khalistan.

But he is trying to win over hardliners such as Simranjit Singh Mann, elected to Parliament from a jail cell in the November polls.

Mann, who has now been released, has said he wants autonomy for an expanded Punjab within India.

Missing Sikh MP's body recovered from a canal

CHANDIGARH, Jan 3. (UPI): Divers today recovered from a canal the body of a newly elected Sikh member of Parliament associated with extremists fighting in Punjab state for the creation of an independent Sikh nation, police said.

Police and officials reiterated a belief that Jagdev Singh Kudian committed suicide. Kudian's party, however, contended he had been murdered by unnamed enemies.

Kudian, 55, disappeared on Dec 28, from his home in the Faridkot district village from which he took his name, and that afternoon police recovered from the banks of the nearby Rajasthan feeder canal his turban, shawl and shoes.

Police said divers found the body today in the canal about two miles downstream from where Kudian's belongings were discovered.

The corpse was brought to a hospital in Faridkot, about 130 miles (210 km) west of the state capital of Chandigarh, for an autopsy, police said.

Kudian had been the target of an intense search since his disappearance, with authorities slowly lowering the water level in the canal to aid divers and hundreds of security personnel scouring the surrounding area with the help of helicopters.

Officials initially suspected he had been kidnapped, but later said they believed he committed suicide as relations reported that he had been depressed because of a lengthy and acrimonious land dispute with family members.

They also said he had been threatened by Sikh militants for taking his parliamentary oath in violation of a directive that he not do so until the new government of Prime Minister V.P. Singh grant a set of political demands.

Kudian, a veteran politician and former state official, was member of a faction of the Sikh Akali Dal party associated with Sikh extremists.

Palestinian dissidents offer reunification

DAMASCUS, Jan 3. (AP): Syrian-backed Palestinian dissidents are considering a proposal for reuniting with Yasser Arafat's mainstream PLO after a 7-year feud, a senior official said today.

Khaled Fahoum, chairman of the Palestine National Salvation Front, a loose coalition of dissidents who had sought Arafat's ouster as PLO chairman, said: "I have presented an initiative to reconcile all Palestinian factions under the PLO."

He told reporters the three leaders of the PNSF groups — Col. Saeed Mousa of the self-styled Fatah-uprising, Ahmed Jibril of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine-General Command, and Issam Kadi, head of Saiga — have agreed to study my proposal and give me their replies as soon as possible.

Saiga and the PFLP-GC have been suspended from the PLO which groups seven other factions.

The PFLP-GC has been blamed for the mid-air explosion of the Pan Am jumbo jet over Scotland in December 1988, in which 270 people were killed. Jibril, a former Syrian Army captain backed by Libya, has denied the charge.

But his return to the PLO might compromise Arafat's peace overtures and jeopardise the dialogue Washington agreed to open with the PLO 13 months ago after Arafat explicitly renounced terrorism.

Fahoum did not disclose details of his initiative, and there was no official reaction from the PLO.

But he said Suleiman Najib, a member of the Palestine Communist Party, one of Arafat's loyalist factions, has welcomed the initiative.

"The PLO is always open for the return of those who split from it," Fahoum quoted Najib, a member of the PLO's ruling 15-man executive committee, as saying.



Unknown assailants raked the home of the Lebanese Christian military police chief with machine gun fire before dawn yesterday in an assassination attempt that killed at least five people, police said.

Lt Col Adel Sassin escaped unhurt as his guards battled with the attackers in the mountain resort town of Beit Meri in the Christian enclave, a police spokesman said.

Picture shows a man and his wife, holding AK-47 rifles, shout in support of Amal militia battling Hezbollah. (Reuters wirephoto)

(See Page 7)

Deal likely on Noriega

WASHINGTON, Jan 3. (Reuters): The White House, in an apparent policy shift, refused today to rule out letting deposed Panamanian strongman Manuel Antonio Noriega seek asylum in some third country.

"We've never said no third country. What we have said is we want him to come back to the United States (to stand trial) but we're not going to rule out every other alternative," spokesman Martin Fitzwater said.

Fitzwater's comments seemed to open the door to a deal that could break the standoff with the Vatican embassy. (See Page 4)

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Hanoi party chief to quit

Do Muoi likely successor

HANOI, Jan 3. (Reuters): Vietnamese Communist Party secretary general Nguyen Van Linh will resign at a forthcoming party meeting, Vietnamese officials said today.

Officials said Linh, who is 74 and has been ill since late October, would step down from the party's top post for health reasons at a plenum of its central committee.

They said the meeting would be held within two months. "He is too old. There will be a party plenum after Tet (Vietnamese lunar new year)," said Bui Tin, deputy chief editor of the Communist Party daily Nhan Dan. He said Nguyen's successor would be decided then.

The three-day Tet holiday starts on Jan 27. One Eastern European diplomat said: "He has to step down because of his health. If they want to make the Communist Party stronger they need another leader."

Hailed

Vietnamese officials in Hanoi said Linh, hailed as a reformer in the mould of Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev when he was elected party general-secretary in late 1986, has been ill since catching a severe cold during a visit to East Germany last October.

Officials said the party meeting, to be held at the latest by early March, would accept his resignation and agree on someone to replace him.

But they said any decision on his successor would have to be approved at a full congress of party members which they said would not be held until next year.

"There will be a swapping of posts by the top three or four at this party plenum or the congress," one diplomat said. "But apart from Linh it will be the same old boys at the top," he added.

Vietnam, frightened by the crumbling of Communist rule among its Eastern European allies, has cracked down on internal dissent and confirmed its commitment to building a one-party socialist state.

The Communist Party, which has ruled the north for the past 36 years and the whole country since its forces toppled the US-backed Republic of South Vietnam in 1975, cautiously embraced Soviet-style reforms in 1987 but has not relaxed its sole grip on power.

Declined

Vietnamese officials declined to speculate on who would replace Linh, but diplomats said the most likely candidate was Prime Minister Do Muoi, who last month was elected to the additional job of vice chairman of the National Defence Council. Diplomats said that appointment gave him the same control as powerful late Premier Pham Hung and confirmed his seniority over Vice Premier Vo Van Kiet, also seen as a contender for party leadership.

Officials said Linh, a northerner, was currently living in the southern city of Ho Chi Minh, formerly Saigon, where he was being treated for a problem with a facial nerve.

State-run radio reported him on Monday as visiting troops in the south, one of the few public appearances he has made since October.

HK may send boat people to secret camp

HONG KONG, Jan 3. (Reuters): Hong Kong is considering moving batches of Vietnamese boat people to a camp in an area patrolled by the military, a move aid workers say could allow forcible repatriations free from the glare of publicity.

The camp at San Uk Ling lies in a border area patrolled by soldiers and police searching for illegal immigrants trying to sneak in from China. Hong Kong people need permits to enter the zone.

"San Uk Ling is being considered ... and minor works are being carried out there," a police spokesman said today.

Aid workers at Hong Kong camps say they believe the camp will serve as a temporary holding centre for boat people who are next in line to be sent back against their will.

"I don't know how they will get them out of the camps in the first place but they can almost guarantee no publicity," a volunteer who moves from camp to camp said by telephone.

Hong Kong attracted stinging international criticism when 51 Vietnamese boat people were pulled from their beds at dead of night last month and placed against their will on a chartered flight to

Hanoi. Scores of journalists besieged the holding centre, where the 51 asylum-seekers spent their final days in Hong Kong, and reported on their departure despite government attempts at secrecy.

The police spokesman said San Uk Ling had been emptied of illegal Chinese immigrants billeted there pending their repatriation to China.

He said no firm decision had been taken on whether to use the centre for Vietnamese and declined to comment on local newspaper reports that the first group would be moved into the 600-bed

facility as early as Monday.

Rumours that Hong Kong was on the verge of forcibly repatriating a second group spread through an island camp on Friday provoking rioting in which 14 Vietnamese and 26 guards and police were injured.

Violence raged for about six hours before more than 300 riot police and 100 rounds of teargas quelled the rioting.

Hong Kong officials have said forcible repatriation will resume as soon as possible, probably this month.



Going to attend meeting

Philippine President Corazon Aquino walks with newly appointed Transportation and Communications Secretary Oscar Orbes before the start of

cabinet meeting at the presidential palace. Aquino revamped her cabinet recently after a failed coup. (Reuters wirephoto)

Militants blow up bus in Kashmir

KLF strikes again

JAMMU, India, Jan 3. (AP): Suspected Muslim militants yesterday hijacked a bus and blew it up after ordering all passengers and the driver out of the vehicle in Jammu-Kashmir state, police said.

Deputy police inspector-general Shooeb Ali said four men carrying Soviet-made AK-47 assault rifles held up a private bus when it was about to enter Srinagar, the summer capital of the northern state.

Ali was contacted in Srinagar by telephone from Jammu, the state's winter capital, 150 kms (93 miles) to the south.

He said the men asked the 50 passengers to lay down on the highway and ordered the driver, Ghulam Mohammad, to divert the bus to an isolated spot on a side road where they exploded it.

There were no injuries, he said.

Mohammad, who jumped out of the bus before the explosion, was found crying by policemen who arrived on the scene on hearing the blast at checkpoint one half kilometre (mile) away, Ali said.

He said no group has claimed responsibility for the explosion that occurred at about 10 pm (0430 GMT). The gunmen escaped in the darkness, he said.

The bus was on a regular run between Gulab Bagh and Srinagar, a distance of 15 kms (9 miles).

It was not immediately known if bombs or other kinds of explosives were used. The bus was completely damaged, Ali said.

A similar hijacking of a bus and exploding it later was done by militants of a Muslim secessionist group known as the Kashmir Liberation Front on Aug 14 last. No one was injured in that incident also.

The front has been fighting for Kashmir region's secession from India to either merge with neighbouring Islamic Pakistan or become independent.

Militants of the group kidnapped the daughter of India's Home Minister Mufti Mohammad Sayeed last month and released her after six days in captivity in a ransom deal that won the freedom of five-jailed comrades.

Tuesday night's explosion came at the end of a violent day in Srinagar where five bombs exploded. Three were claimed by the Kashmir Liberation Front and two by another secessionist group.

No deaths were reported in the blasts.

Unidentified Kashmiri militants also shot to death a Muslim man in a village near Srinagar on Tuesday, accusing him of being a police informer, Ali said.

Jammu-Kashmir is the only Muslim majority state in the officially secular, predominantly Hindu India.

Barbara sees double

Radiation treatment

WASHINGTON, Jan 3. (AP): First Lady Barbara Bush today began the first of 10 days of radiation treatment for eyeswelling and impaired vision resulting from a troublesome thyroid condition, her office said.

Mrs Bush went to Walter Reed army medical centre for the 10-minute treatment, which will be repeated for each of the next nine days, said spokeswoman Jean Becker.

The wife of President George Bush suffers from Graves' dis-

ease which has resulted in a swelling behind her eyes, tearing and double vision. The radiation, focused on bony canals behind the eyes, called orbits, is intended to reduce the swelling, Becker said.

The radiation treatment will not prevent Mrs Bush from carrying out her normal schedule, the spokeswoman said.

Mrs Bush, 64, was diagnosed with Graves' disease last year and was prescribed the drug Prednisone to treat the eye side effect.

81 die as rival Tamils battle

COLOMBO, Jan 3. (Reuters): At least 81 people were killed in clashes between two rival Tamil groups in Sri Lanka's northern Vavuniya district this week, security sources and residents said today.

They said 55 men of an illegal Tamil militia were shot dead when fighters of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam stormed their camp at Musalkuthy.

The Tigers lost three men in the fighting on Sunday and Monday, the sources said.

A resident at Vavuniya, who had visited the battle scene 30 km (20 miles) away, said the Tigers had driven away the soldiers of the illegal militia known as the Tamil National Army (TNA) and taken control of the area.

The TNA was raised by another Tamil group, the Eelam People's Revolutionary Liberation Front and its allies, to protect themselves from the Tigers, security sources said.

The resident said 300 people in Musalkuthy had fled their homes following the fighting and taken refuge in a school.

The Tigers, the dominant Tamil rebel group, has taken control of five districts in the northeastern region vacated by Indian troops in the past two months, residents said.

The security source said, Tamil rebels had gone on a looting rampage in the villages bordering the eastern Batticaloa district. The extremists, armed with an assortment of rifles, had entered the houses of rich businessmen and looted their belongings adding even LTTE cadres were hijacking state owned vehicles.

Meanwhile, the security situation in the southern and central parts of the country remains calm, with the arrest of several regional leaders of the extremist group, the JVP or People's Liberation Front by the government troops.

Intrigue follows sex Shapely legs

MANILA, Jan 3. (AP): The former land reform secretary says intrigue follows sex as the second most popular sport in the Philippines and she wants to be remembered for shapely legs, and not alleged links to coup plotters.

Miriam Defensor Santiago was replaced Sunday as secretary of the Department of Agrarian Reform in a major cabinet shakeup. Her name reportedly appeared on a list of possible members of a junta to be installed if military mutineers had toppled President Corazon Aquino last month.

"I appeal to you not to include my name in your junta list again because it gets me into trouble," Mrs Santiago told reporters yesterday. "Instead, you may include me in the list of Filipinas with the most shapely legs."

Mrs Santiago also complained that her tenure in the Agrarian Reform Department was undermined by political intrigue in the Aquino administration.

"In this country, intrigue is the second most popular indoor sport, second only to sex," she said.

Mrs Santiago's departure from government removes one of the most colourful figures in the Aquino administration.

As immigration commissioner, Mrs Santiago once publicly called a congressional critic a "fungus-face" and suggested he stick his finger in an electrical socket. She then challenged the congressman to a fist-fight, an offer he never accepted.

Understanding in Indo-Nepal talks

Crown prince is now adult

NEW DELHI, Jan 3. (UPI): The month-old National Front government moved today to fulfil an election vow to seek better relations with India's neighbours, opening talks with Nepal on a lengthy trade dispute on which an official said "an understanding is likely."

Foreign Minister Inder Kumar Gujral held hour-long talks with his Nepalese counterpart, Shailendra Upadhyaya, focusing on a serious dispute over trade and cross-border transit that prompted former Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi to impose an almost complete economic blockade on the tiny Hindu kingdom.

The blockade, in which New Delhi closed beginning last March all but two of 15 border points through which Kathmandu imports and exports goods via the Indian port of Calcutta, has produced chronic shortages of fuel and other items in impoverished landlocked Nepal.

The shortages have fueled unemployment and inflation. A Foreign Ministry spokesman said the talks between Gujral and Upadhyaya and their delegations were "cordial and friendly" and added that "an understanding is likely" on resolving differences.

At a dinner later for his guest, Gujral said his government was willing to negotiate "an early, mutually acceptable and beneficial solution" to the dispute.

The discussions were scheduled to continue tomorrow.

The dispute erupted after the expiry of bilateral treaties governing Indo-Nepalese trade and the transit through India of Nepalese imports and exports.

New Delhi also was unhappy about Kathmandu's purchase in 1988 of weapons from China, India's foe in a 1962 border war and its main rival for influence in Nepal, which is strategically sandwiched between Asia's two largest nations.

Crown Prince Dipendra formally became an adult today and the Hindu kingdom of Nepal celebrated with a national holiday, a 21-gun salute, and flags and festoons on main Kathmandu streets.

Kathmandu citizens came out to greet the 18-year-old future king as a six-horse carriage took him to a temple in the capital's centre to seek the blessing of Lord Ganesh, an elephant-headed deity, for his future public work.

109 die of cold in India

NEW DELHI, Jan 3. (AP): At least 109 people, most of them poor and homeless, have died of exposure to cold in northern India in the past two weeks, a news agency reported yesterday.

In neighbouring Bangladesh, 82 people have died in the same period, United News of Bangladesh news agency said.

Press Trust of India said most deaths in India were reported from the northern state of Bihar, which is also one of the poorest regions in the country.

The news agency, quoting meteorologists, said "there was no hope of a letup in the chilly spell (and) the cold is likely to continue throughout the next week."

Temperatures in the plains of northern India dipped to 1 degree Celsius (34 degrees Fahrenheit), PTI said. It said air and surface traffic have been hampered by the accompanying fog.

Guilt conscious Norwegian confesses to '71 murder

OSLO, Jan 3. (AP): A Norwegian turned himself in for a 1971 murder, telling police that 18 years of guilty feelings had made him an alcoholic and ruined his life, reports said today.

The 45-year-old man had never been suspected during an intensive police investigation. Police, who are withholding the suspect's identity, said he has been charged with first-degree murder and concealing a serious crime. He faces 21 years in prison if convicted.

"There are many elements in his statement

that tie him to the murder," police officer Are Bohne told the newspaper Arbeiderbladet.

Over the years, the suspect had repeatedly told friends that he murdered hotel clerk Jan Petter Jensen during a failed August 1971 robbery in Toensberg, Norway, later dismissing the confessions as "drunken ramblings," reported the newspaper Aftenposten.

"I couldn't live with it anymore. Living with the murder became a hell of alcoholism and despair," daily newspaper Arbeider-

bladet quoted him as saying about confessing.

Police at first doubted his Dec 29 admission, made when the suspect was intoxicated, said the reports. He was charged after repeated questioning.

The suspect told police he hit Jensen when the nightclerk caught him breaking into the hotel cash drawer. He said he was looking for money to rent a room, even though he lived in the southern town of Toensberg at the time, because he felt too ill to walk home. He fled unseen through the window.

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US tests milk for harmful chemicals

WASHINGTON, Jan 3, (AP) — The US Food and Drug Administration said yesterday that it has begun testing retail milk supplies in 13 cities after an independent survey found samples in several areas tainted with potentially harmful drugs.

The FDA said that while it "is concerned that these unconfirmed findings may indicate relative drug residues in milk," it sees "no public health threat associated with animal drug residues in milk at the levels reported by the Wall Street Journal."

The journal's survey, reported Friday, found that of 50 retail samples collected in 10 major cities, 38 per cent were contaminated with antibiotics and sulfa drugs used to treat sick cattle, including sulfamethazine, a suspected carcinogen.

Another survey by the Centre for Science in the public interest tested 20 milk samples from store shelves in metropolitan Washington and found 20 per cent were tainted, the newspaper reported.

The FDA last year revised labeling for sulfamethazine to warn against using it in lactating dairy cows for any reason because of recent studies finding that at high levels it can cause tumours in mice and rats.

In 1988, the FDA tested retail milk supplies in 10 cities and found sulfamethazine in five of 49 samples at more than the allowable limit of 10 parts per billion.

In response, the FDA launched a nationwide education programme to alert state and industry officials to the problem.

In announcing the 13-city milk survey, the FDA said "dairy farmers must... take responsibility for avoiding use of sulfamethazine, the drug found which is not approved for dairy cows."

The 13 cities where milk is being tested are: Boston, New York, Philadelphia, Atlanta, Miami, Chicago, Miami, Minneapolis-St. Paul, Kansas City, Denver, Dallas, Los Angeles, San Francisco and Seattle.

Symbolic trip to Antarctic

Cousteau takes kids from around world

NEW YORK, Jan 3, (AP) — Jacques Cousteau and his son, Jean-Michel, are headed for Antarctica this week, leading an expedition with six children representing the world's other continents.

"We are going on behalf of the generations to come — the children of tomorrow," said Jean-Michel Cousteau. "We decided to have them step on this virgin land, as big as the continental United States, and have them realise it will be their responsibility to either care for it or exploit it."

Jacques Cousteau, the 79-year-old ocean explorer known for his television specials and environmental activism, has been promoting a French-Australian proposal to make Antarctica a nature reserve.

The United States and Britain oppose the idea,

urging instead for an international minerals treaty that would permit regulated mining there.

The expedition was to sail today from Punta Arenas, Chile, and arrive in Antarctica on Saturday, weather permitting.

Jean-Michel Cousteau was in New York yesterday and planned to catch up with the group in Antarctica later.

The children will talk to scientists and observe the Cousteau team. Divers will film the wreck of an Argentinean supply ship, Bahia Paraíso. The resulting oil spill hindered experiments into the ozone depletion.

South America will be represented by Jeronimo

Brunner, 11, of Santiago, Chile.

The other children are: Cory Gillmer, 12, a sixth grader from Virginia Beach, Virginia, representing North America; Kelly Jean Matheson of Hobart, Australia, a fifth grader whose age was not given; Fumiko Matsumoto, 11, of Hamamatsu, Japan, representing Asia; Eliose Otzenberger, 11, of Paris, representing Europe; and Oko Joseph Skio, 12, of Tanzania, hometown unknown, representing Africa.

All except Brunner and Gillmer attend schools in Paris.

Charles Vimick, a spokesman for the Cousteau Society, said there was no particular criteria for selecting the students.



Cousteau holds up a flag during a press conference Jan 2. (Reuters wirephoto)



Nadia's brother

Adrian Comaneci, 22-year-old brother of Olympic gymnastics gold medalist Nadia Comaneci, surveys his sister's bedroom and her doll collection. He is wearing a T-shirt which has the slogan "Long life to Romanian liberty" printed on it. (Reuters wirephoto)

Redoubt erupts again in Alaska

ANCHORAGE, Jan 3, (AP) — Airline flights were cancelled and residents marvelled at a spectacular light show, as Redoubt volcano shot ash into the sky in its biggest eruption since waking from a 25-year sleep.

The Alaska Volcano Observatory said the eruption shortly before 6 pm yesterday (0300 GMT) today was Redoubt's biggest since seismic activity began Dec 13.

Pilots reported a plume as high as 40,000 feet (12,200 metres) and said lava appeared to be flowing down the volcano's northwest flank 115 miles (185 kilometres) southwest of Anchorage, observatory scientists said.

A radio station near Kenai, across Cook Inlet from the volcano, was swamped with calls from people who saw lights in the sky.

"We've had listeners on the air reporting what looked like heated, falling stones," said John Davis of station KSRM. He said people parked their cars near inlet beaches to watch the display.

Geologist Robert McGimsey of the observatory in Anchorage said it was possible the reported lava flow was a mixture of ash and not gas. He said scientists would have to wait until daylight to investigate.

The volcano spewed an "extensive ash plume," McGimsey said. Another geologist at the observatory, Don Richter, said late last night that it appeared most of the has had settled before reaching populated areas.

Richter said "a number of strong but less severe (seismic) event's occurred" about 8 pm (0500 GMT) today.

The Federal Aviation Administration advised pilots to "continually evaluate operations to and from Anchorage." A number of flights scheduled for last night and this morning were cancelled, and some night flights were diverted to other airports.

Scientists have been monitoring the volcano around the clock. The peak erupted three weeks ago and spewed ash 33,000 feet (10,000 metres) into the air the next day. Varying levels of seismic activity continued through the month.

Last month, Christmas travellers and mail were delayed and Anchorage air traffic slowed to a trickle after a KLM Royal Dutch Airlines Boeing 747 flew through ash, lost power to all four engines and fell more than 2 miles (3 kilometres). The plane made a safe emergency landing after the engines were restarted.

The habitation nearest the volcano, the drift river oil storage facility 20 miles (32 kilometres) away, was evacuated yesterday when scientists issued warnings about the upcoming eruption, the Alaska division of emergency services said.

Murder probe

Yard man in Kenya

NAIROBI, Kenya, Jan 3, (AP) — A top Scotland Yard investigator travelled to the Masai Mara Game Reserve today to begin probing the 1988 murder of a 28-year-old British woman, according to the British High Commission.

Ken Thompson, a chief superintendent for the British criminal investigative body, arrived yesterday and immediately began talks with Kenyan police on the murder of Julie Ward, whose death was the focus of a highly publicised Kenyan inquest last year.

The 23-day inquest, conducted by chief magistrate Joseph Mango, ruled that Miss Ward had been murdered, despite the state's contention the wildlife photography enthusiast had been eaten by carnivorous animals in the sprawling southwestern game reserve.

Miss Ward's partly charred lower left leg and lower jaw were found in the reserve Sept 13, 1988, a week after she reportedly left the park.

'Batman' 1989's biggest blockbuster

US theatres reap record \$5b

LOS ANGELES, Jan 3, (AP) — North America's movie theatres reaped a record of more than \$5 billion at the box office in 1989, powered by the punch of "Batman" and other highly promoted action films.

Despite a lacklustre Christmas holiday season, summertime moviegoers spun the turnstiles at such a dizzying pace that the box-office record of \$4.45 billion from 1988 was smashed, according to figures released yesterday.

The official box-office total was set by fewer films: 446 features made their debuts in 1989, down 13 per cent from the previous year.

In the studio-by-studio race, Warner Bros. was No.

1 with an estimated 17.1 per cent share of all US and Canadian tickets sold.

The studio's "Batman" was the year's biggest blockbuster. Its \$251.2 million in ticket sales was fifth-highest in history.

Although part of the revenue surge is attributable to higher ticket prices, admissions are projected to be greater than last year.

In large part, the record year was propelled by expensive and heavily marketed star vehicles such as "Batman," and "Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade," which made \$196 million and "Lethal Weapon 2," which collected \$147 million.

roles for Hispanics

The 28-year-old comic, who plays a ski patrolman in the upcoming movie, "Ski Patrol," said in a recent interview that Hispanics "are being totally left out" of television sitcoms.

"When you look ethnic it's that much harder," he said. "Everyone is thin and caucasian and I don't look like that. ... I'd like to play a professional, an attorney, a guy who just works for a living, a 'thirtysomething'-type character."

He steers clear of ethnic stereotypes in movie and television roles. (AP)

ELGIN, Illinois: A car thief drove away with more than he had bargained for — a 4-year-old girl asleep in the front seat.

The car was found abandoned about an hour after the incident Sunday, and the child was still asleep, authorities said.

A woman had driven to a supermarket in this city 40 miles west of Chicago and left her

daughter asleep and the car's engine running, said Elgin police sergeant Norm Landwehr.

The woman, who was not identified by police, returned to find that her car and child were missing, Landwehr said.

Police in the neighbouring town of Streamwood received an anonymous call about a half-hour later, saying the car and the child could be found in the parking lot of a townhouse development there.

The child was reunited with her mother, police said. (AP)

PILSEN, Kansas: If Monsignor Arthur Tonne has his way, clergymen may soon be stand-up comedians a run for their money.

"A lot of priests can't tell jokes," Tonne says. "A lot of Protestant ministers can't, either. In fact, they probably even have a higher percentage who can't. Too many clergymen tend to be so serious about things, they just can't do it."

As the author of seven volumes of "Jokes Priests Can Tell," Tonne,

85, has a talent for keeping his followers laughing.

Tonne said he goes to great lengths to make sure his humour is respectful. He uses the occasional ethnic jokes, but only after they have been approved by representative members of the targeted group.

He does not like sexual jokes, but admits that "you do remember the darned things." (AP)

LOS ANGELES: Actor Alan Hale Jr., who played the jovial skipper who led a zany band of castaways on television's "Gilligan's Island," has died after being hospitalized for cancer at age 68.

Hale died Tuesday at St Vincent's Hospital, where he had been a patient for about a month after being diagnosed with the disease a year ago, said Bonnie Chisholm, a spokeswoman for his family.

A Los Angeles native, Hale appeared in 65 movies, but became a fixture on television thanks to the syndication of "Gilligan's Island."

Man goes out on shooting spree

7 die in Greenland massacre

NUUK, Greenland, Jan 3, (UPI) — The death toll in Greenland's worst ever mass killing rose to seven yesterday with the deaths of two hospitalised women who were shot in the face by an 18-year-old man, Narsaq police said.

Five people were killed outright in the shooting spree which took place Monday in a complex of boarding-house rooms in the southern Greenland hamlet of Narsaq, 400 km (250 miles) south of the capital Nuuk. Narsaq has a population of almost 2000.

"One 22-year-old man is still in hospital recovering from his wounds. His condition is serious but seems to be stable," police inspector Lars Heilmann told United Press International in a telephone interview from Narsaq.

"They were all shot in the face with a rifle. Five of them

died immediately. There was only small hope for the two women who were hospitalised," Heilmann said.

"It appears there had been a New Year's party, but we have no immediate indication of the motive," Heilmann added saying the scene that met police after the killings had been "bloody and gruesome."

Those killed were three men aged 18, 33 and 34 and four women aged 18, 19, 26 and 29. Their names were not released but all were said to be Greenlanders.

"This is the worst tragedy of its type ever in Greenland," Heilmann said.

"The 18-year-old has admitted the killings. He has been remanded in custody for four weeks pending investigation and forensic reports," Heilmann said.



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INTERNATIONAL

Noriega aides' trials open

Noriega indicted on partial intelligence data

MIAMI, Jan 3. (AP) Two co-defendants of deposed Panamanian leader Manuel Antonio Noriega appeared in court yesterday to face drug charges, but their lawyers challenged the US government's right to extradite them from Panama.

Daniel Miranda, 36, gave only his name and age through an interpreter to a federal magistrate. His attorney, Michael O'Kane, said Miranda would remain mute throughout the proceeding.

"This is a violation of the Panama Canal treaty," the defence lawyer argued. "It says that if there are any criminal acts, the defendant would be turned over to Panamanian authorities and not surrendered to the United States."

In another courtroom, Luis del Cid, whom prosecutors have called Noriega's "right-hand man," had his pre-trial detention hearing continued until Jan 16 so his lawyers can bring witnesses from Panama.

"As much as American citizens might like to see justice done to criminals all over the world, the United States is not an international police force," said Del Cid's lawyer, Samuel Bustyn. "The United States just can't go out and invade other countries and arrest whomever it wants."

Del Cid has been held in Miami since he surrendered to US troops in Panama's northern Chiriqui province on Christmas Eve and flown to Florida the next day.

Miranda was captured by US military personnel and Drug Enforcement Administration agents during a raid on his Panama City apartment on Sunday, then escorted to the Miami by agents of the US Drug Enforcement Administration on Monday.

An indictment issued here in February 1988 accuses Noriega and 15 other men — including Pablo Escobar Gaviria, leader of a cocaine cartel based in Medellin, Colombia — of running drugs and using Panama as a safe haven for traffickers.

Some department prosecutors privately are concerned because the Miami case relies mainly on convicted drug dealers who became informants as part of a deal to get a lighter sentence or avoid jail altogether.

Noriega's attorneys can be expected to question the credibility of such witnesses, they said.

Retreating from his previous statements, Runkel said: "I'm now told there was not a specific review of all the intelligence material before the indictments were brought."

He said a full intelligence review is now in the "preliminary stage."

Last week, Runkel had said the "normal procedure" for the Justice Department is to carefully weigh intelligence issues before an indictment is brought. Runkel had said then that concerns about disclosure of intelligence secrets in the Noriega case had been "grossly exaggerated."

Richard Gregorie, the former lead prosecutor in the US drug case against Noriega, said he was shown only "absolutely worthless" intelligence information on Noriega when he sought access to CIA records on the Panamanian in 1988. Newspaper clippings comprised a good part of the thin file, Gregorie said.

Noriega had long enjoyed a close relationship with the CIA and other US intelligence agencies. Current and former US officials have said Noriega was paid from CIA accounts for helping gather information on Cuba and Central America.

Noriega could make broad demands for US intelligence files if he went on trial in an effort to show that the United States authorised, or "knew about," his activities. Noriega is known to have met with President George Bush at least twice — in 1976 and 1983.

Gregorie, now in private practice in Miami, said the invasion of Panama also complicates the case against Noriega by raising serious constitutional questions about illegal searches and seizures by US soldiers looking for documents and other evidence.

Noriega was indicted in February 1988 in Miami on charges of receiving more than \$4.6 million to protect cocaine shipments from Colombia to the United States. He also was indicted in Tampa, Florida, on charges of accepting a bribe from drug traffickers.

The Justice Department has said the Miami case is stronger and Noriega will be tried there first if he is taken into US custody.

Meanwhile in Panama, Panama's new attorney general said yesterday he was still preparing to file criminal charges against Noriega as a Vatican envoy began negotiations to help resolve the crisis.

Panama's new vice president and a former top officer of Noriega joined demands yesterday that the deposed strongman be turned out of his asylum in the Vatican's embassy and handed over to US forces.

Vice President Ricardo Arias Calderon said Papal Nuncio (ambassador) Jose Sebastian Laboa should urge Noriega to leave the nunciature (embassy), where he was granted temporary asylum nine days ago.

If the ousted general did not agree to go, the Vatican should announce the building was no longer a diplomatic seat and allow US troops to go in and get him, Arias Calderon said.

The Panamanian government has closed television and radio stations believed linked to Noriega and said laws affecting the media would be studied because "they were instruments of oppression."

Noriega - Israeli ties on spotlight

WASHINGTON, Jan 3. (Reuters) The bizarre case of an Israeli who was a close associate of Manuel Antonio Noriega and vanished in the turmoil of the US invasion of Panama has focused attention on the deposed general's shadow links with Israel.

US officials in Panama said last week that Mike Harari, a former senior officer in the Israeli Mossad intelligence service, had been captured by US troops. Two days later they admitted they were probably wrong.

"They thought they had him," said a senior US embassy official. "On further checking either they didn't have him — most probable — or he convinced them he was someone else."

Israeli television quoted sources close to Harari's family as saying he was in Israel. Other reports spoke of Harari, 62, being spotted in Nicaragua.

A US Defence Department spokesman said last weekend he was advised to answer questions about Harari by saying military officials had no knowledge of his having been captured.

The confusion prompted some speculation that the United States had quietly let Harari escape to avoid potential embarrassment. But analysts said it was more likely he was inadvertently released, if indeed he was ever detained.

"The intelligence on Noriega and the top Panamanian leadership was not particularly good prior to the invasion," said one analyst. "Look at how Noriega himself was able to wander around and finally find refuge at the Vatican embassy."

Another, who knew Harari, said it was entirely likely that he could have tricked US troops into letting him go.

"He is very intelligent, very highly-trained and he knows his way around Panama as few others do," the analyst said.

According to this analyst, who asked not to be named, Harari, a longtime business associate of Noriega, was the conduit for the general's blossoming relationship with the Israeli government.

"When the US ended its relationship with Noriega, he turned to the Israelis. They provided technicians and spare parts, fixed his helicopter and set up a communications network for the Panamanian military," he said.

Noriega himself seemed to have had ambivalent feelings about Israel. On the one hand the US military has produced evidence he kept a picture of Hitler in his voodoo chamber. On the other, he bought a house in a fashionable suburb of Tel Aviv and sent his children to a Jewish school.

Harari retired in 1979 as head of the Mossad in Central America and Mexico. Previously, he headed Israeli hit squad operations which killed a number of Palestinians in revenge for the massacre of Israeli athletes at the 1972 Munich Olympics.

He first met Noriega in 1973 when the general headed Panama's G-2 intelligence unit for the late Omar Torrijos, who died in a 1981 plane crash.

Harari played an integral role in developing the Panamanian Defence Forces and even suggested giving them their innocuous-sounding name, based on the Israeli defence forces.

He also trained and recruited Noriega's personal security detail, which included former Israeli soldiers and Cuban military advisers.

America

Skydiver falls to death: A skydiver fell about 10,000 feet (3,000 metres) to her death jumping from a plane just north of Houston Gulf airport and failing to deploy either of two parachutes.

The 45-year-old woman, whose name was withheld pending notification of relatives, died just after the fall at 5:20 pm Monday.

Lindsay Carleton, owner of Skydive SpaceLand, said the woman jumped with three other skydivers from a twin-engine turboprop airplane. Neither the jump parachute nor a reserve chute were deployed, he said. (AP)

Copter without tail rotor: McDonnell Douglas Helicopter Co. announced Tuesday the successful flight of a production helicopter without a tail rotor.

McDonnell Douglas said the craft is the world's first conventional production helicopter without a tail rotor.

Instead of relying on a tail rotor for anti-torque control, it captures air from the main rotor's downwash and circulates it through slots in the helicopter's tail boom, the company said. The resulting "lift" is similar to the airflow over the top of an airplane's wing, except that the helicopter's bow is to the side, the company said. (AP)

Yacht sinks, 14 missing: Rescuers searched the Gulf of California on Wednesday for 11 US tourists and three Mexican crew members missing after their boat sank during a diving expedition, port officials said.

An American passenger who was one of two survivors found after spending more than a day in the water said Tuesday he clung to a door that had floated from the debris.

"I was saved thanks to a door I floated on," Oram Watson told the Hermosillo, Mexico, newspaper El Imparcial. "I remember that at 6 in the morning on Monday I couldn't recognise anyone." (AP)

Bush's attend funeral: President George Bush said his wife Barbara flew to the Boston suburb of Lincoln, Tuesday to attend the funeral of Bush's brother-in-law, businessman Alexander Ellis.

As the Bushes and a small entourage arrived at St Joseph's Roman Catholic Church, a handful of protesters stood quietly with a large banner saying, "Will you attend the funeral in Panama?"

The trip here came as the first group of soldiers that Bush sent to Panama to oust Gen. Manuel Antonio Noriega returned to the United States. The 141 troops were only a fraction of the some 14,000 troops dispatched from US bases for the Dec 20 invasion. (AP)

US civil rights lawyer dies: R. Jess Brown, a civil rights lawyer whose clients included James Meredith as well as a young black man who was lynched before he could be brought to trial on charges of raping a white woman, has died at 77 in Jackson, Mississippi.

Brown, who died of cancer Sunday at Hinds General Hospital, took an early stand against segregationist laws and was credited in the 1950s with filing the first civil rights suit in the state of Mississippi.

He was one of Meredith's lawyers in his successful bid to break the colour barrier and gain admission to the University of Mississippi in 1962. (AP)

Anti-bigotry project: From racial strife to the exclusionary traditions of private social clubs, close-to-home issues of bigotry are coming to Georgia's classrooms under a new education project.

The voluntary programme, to be formally unveiled Thursday, will provide teachers with materials and training to include anti-bigotry lessons in their curriculum. The programme includes general themes of racial, religious and ethnic understanding and portions dealing with matters of specific interest to Georgia.

The materials will be made available to school systems through the "A World of Difference" campaign sponsored by the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith and several corporate backers. (AP)

Bush sends greetings: President George Bush on Tuesday sent New Year's greetings to civil rights leader Benjamin Hooks and decried a recent spate of racially motivated bomb attacks and threats in the southern United States.

"The recent bombings make it clear we have not totally beaten back the evils of bigotry and racial prejudice," Bush wrote in his New Year's message to the executive director of the National Association for the Advancement of Coloured People.

"We cannot let up in the fight against racism," Bush added. (AP)

Ex-communicated parishioner held: An ex-communicated parishioner set a fire to a church on fire and held police and firefighters at bay for an hour before coming outside to dance on the porch in face paint, authorities say in Independence, Missouri.

The man, who had telephoned police Monday saying he was inside the 87-year-old wood building with hand grenades and other weapons, had said he would surrender if he were allowed to dance.

"It was something to the effect of a native American Indian dance," a police officer said. "He was jumping up and down." (AP)

Passengers praise airline: An airline passengers group praised Northwest Airlines on Tuesday for acknowledging a bomb threat last week and giving passengers the option of cancelling their reservations.

More than 100 travellers gave up bookings on Saturday's flight 51 from Paris to Detroit. The DC-10, with a capacity of 284 passengers, arrived safely in Detroit with 22 passengers on board.



Self-made US designer dies

AMERICAN fashion designer Patrick Kelly, a self-made man who charmed stars from Bette Davis to Isabella Rossellini with his outfits featuring huge multi-coloured buttons and billiard balls, has died at a Paris hospital at the age of 37 after a long illness, friends said Tuesday.

He died Monday of a bone disease and brain tumour, the friends said. (Reuters wirephoto)

Plot to kill law officer

Attacker shot

CAMDEN, New Jersey, Jan 3. (AP) A prosecutor who often accompanies detectives on drug raids said he barely escaped an assassination attempt by fleeing in his car and shooting one of his assailants in the head.

"Thank God I'm alive," Camden County prosecutor Samuel Asbell told reporters yesterday. "I guess it just wasn't my day or my time."

Asbell said two gunmen followed him as he drove from his office on New Year's Day, then opened fire. He was sprayed with glass from his windows but was not seriously injured.

The assailants pursued him in a green Toyota station wagon and fired at him in his car as he left his downtown office at 5 pm Monday, Asbell said. He said he was in his office on New Year's Day to catch up on paperwork.

Friend kills patient, self

Aids slaying

LOS ANGELES, Jan 3. (AP) A close friend of a patient dying from AIDS complications shot and killed his companion in the hospital, then committed suicide, officials said.

The murder-suicide occurred at shortly after 5 pm yesterday (0100 GMT) in the patient's room at Cedars-Sinai Medical Centre, said hospital spokesman Ron Wise.

"The close friend entered to visit," Wise said. "He killed (the patient), then turned the gun on himself."

Neither man was identified because relatives had not yet been notified, Wise said.

Tubes of cocaine found: Cocaine worth \$4.2 million was stashed in two waterproof tubes attached to the outside of a Colombian ship's hull, according to police in Jacksonville, Florida who seized the drug and arrested four men in diving gear.

Police divers worked for more than 16 hours to detach the tubes from the cargo ship Sunday.

As police watched, four Colombians in diving suits appeared at a boat ramp across the St Johns River from the ship, apparently to retrieve the 265-pound (120-kilogramme) cache, authorities said. The men were arrested on drug trafficking charges. (AP)

Gold prospectors to be removed: Brazil began a multi-million dollar operation on Wednesday to remove thousands of gold prospectors from the lands of the Yanomami Indians in the Amazon and combat disease which is spreading rapidly there.

Indian groups said the clean-up was the first positive step taken by the Brazilian government to save the endangered tribe.

Congress to scrutinise: The United States' aid to the government of war-torn El Salvador is expected to come under attack in Congress in the wake of a large rebel offensive and the slaying of six Jesuit priests, a US embassy spokesman said Tuesday.

Separately, a unilateral Christmas holiday truce called by the rebels of the Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front, or FMLN, was expired midnight Tuesday and security had been beefed up across the country despite a military spokesman's assertions that the armed forces did not expect a new wave of large-scale rebel attacks.

"We do not expect another offensive from (the FMLN) because they have to regroup and return their troops," one army spokesman, but another military spokesman told United Press International that "the armed forces has increased security on a national level." (UPI)

Cuba, Romania get seats in Security Council: character won't change

UNITED NATIONS, Jan 3. (AP) Five countries, including Romania and Cuba, joined the UN Security Council yesterday for two-year terms.

Ivory Coast, Democratic Yemen and Zaire also became members in a regular change of membership that UN and US officials said would not greatly change the character of the body.

"We respect our Warsaw Treaty obligations, but we will energetically pursue consensus solutions sought by the international community on major regional conflicts," said a senior Romanian diplomat, speaking on condition of anonymity. "We want to co-operate."

"We aim to give Romania more international credibility and it will have more believability as it follows the democratic process," the diplomat told the Associated Press in an interview. In the past, he said, such interviews were rare, but Romania now recognises the "importance of openly expressing its views and answering questions."

The 15-member Security Council is the most powerful UN body and can adopt legally binding resolutions. Its five permanent members — the United States, Britain, China, France and the Soviet Union — have veto power.

The other non-permanent members of the council are Canada, Colombia, Ethiopia, Finland and Malaysia.

All 10 non-permanent members of the council serve for two-year terms and are selected on a rotating basis to represent various regions.

Romania replaces Yugoslavia as an Eastern European member, Cuba replaces Brazil. Ivory Coast replaces Algeria, Yemen replaces Nepal and Zaire replaces Senegal.

UN diplomats said they expected Romania's position on the Security Council to be forward-looking. Romania was rocked by a popular uprising in December that toppled the government.

US may face problems in trying general

WASHINGTON, Jan 3. (Agencies) Federal prosecutors failed to conduct a thorough review of intelligence information before indicting Panamanian Gen. Manuel Noriega on drug charges, the Justice Department conceded yesterday.

Noriega, who remained in the Vatican mission in Panama as an impasse over his fate entered its second week, was indicted on drug charges in Florida in 1988. But his long association with the CIA and other US intelligence agencies has raised the prospect of Noriega obtaining intelligence files if he goes on trial in the United States.

Even if the United States get Noriega, putting him on trial may raise a

number of legal problems.

First, Noriega's defence attorneys have served notice that it would be difficult, if not impossible, for their client to get a fair trial because of the widespread prejudicial publicity since the US military invasion began Dec 20.

David Runkel, chief spokesman for Attorney General Dick Thornburgh said prosecutors plan to proceed first in Miami and then will bring Noriega to trial on a three-count indictment returned by a grand jury in Tampa in 1988.



A Vatican expert on Latin America, Monsignor Giacinto Berio (R) was sent to Panama as the Vatican stepped up efforts to seek a solution to the Noriega crisis. (Reuters wirephoto)



A Cuban national, one of the ten who sought refuge with Noriega at the Vatican embassy is escorted from the embassy. He was taken away in a US helicopter. (Reuters wirephoto)

Invasion of Panama

Women troops take part

WASHINGTON, Jan 3. (UPI) The United States sent about 160 women soldiers to Panama on the combat operation "Just Cause" — the most extensive use of gun-wielding female troops in any US conflict, the army said yesterday.

Army policy does not permit women to seek out and engage the enemy in combat, but female soldiers who come under fire are allowed to defend themselves and return gunfire. And they did in Panama, officials said.

"Women have always been involved in our conflicts," army spokesman Paige Eversole said. "This is the operation where women have played their biggest role."

She said there were no casualties, either injuries or deaths, among the 160 US women soldiers sent into Panama as part of the 12,000-strong invasion force Dec 20 or among the women soldiers already stationed there.

Many of the women "were serving with the MPs (military police) ... and were highly visible. ... They were receiving fire and returning fire. But they were not seeking out and engaging the enemy," Eversole said.

Army Sgt. Melissa Jackson, 22, of El Paso, Texas, assigned to Panama as a supply sergeant in October, was one of those caught in the fighting. She returned to the

United States yesterday with other US troops.

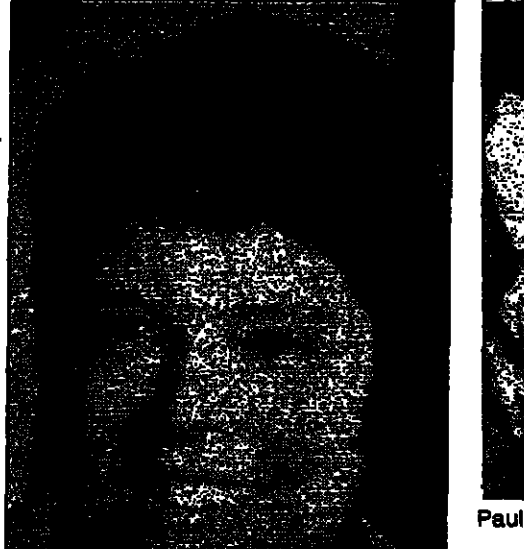
"When you're in a situation like that, there's no way that you can get out of there," Jackson told reporters in San Antonio, Texas. "You can't avoid it. So if you're there, you're there. It was scary."

Of the 160 women deployed on the Panama operation, 47 were members of the 16th Military Police Brigade from Fort Bragg, North Carolina, and 43 came from the 7th Infantry Division, Fort Ord, California.

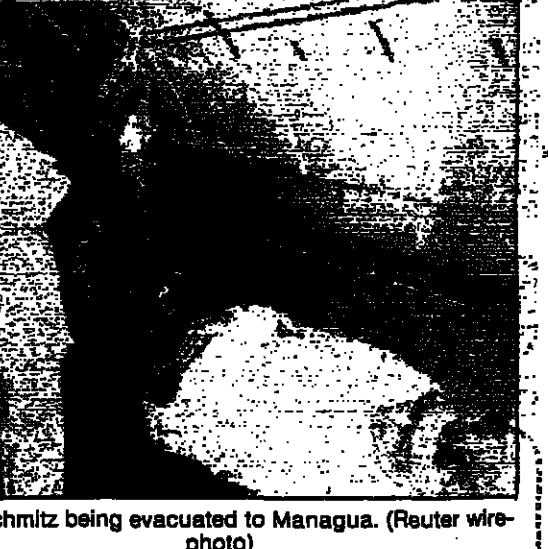
In addition, 34 women were deployed with the corps support command, 28 were from the 525th Military Intelligence Brigade, 14 were from the 35th Signal Brigade, four were from Special Operations Command, and two each were from the 18th Airborne Headquarters and the 18th Finance Corps.

"There was a conscious decision to send women. There was no conscious decision not to send women," Eversole said, adding that these women were members of military units ordered to Panama. "No one got in their way."

The four women from Special Operations sent to Panama were members of the elite navy Seals nor the Delta Force, because these are defined as combat groups, Eversole said.



Paul Schmitz being evacuated to Managua. (Reuters wirephoto)



Nicaraguans carrying the coffin of Maureen Courtney. (Reuters wirephoto)

2 nuns killed in Managua

Church workers ambushed

MANAGUA, Nicaragua, Jan 3. (AP) The government is blaming rebels for killing two nuns and wounding a bishop and a third nun in an ambush in Nicaragua's remote Caribbean coastal region. The bishop says their pickup truck was attacked, but he doesn't know who was responsible.

Sister Maureen Courtney, 42, of the United States and Sister Teresa Rosales of Nicaragua were killed in the attack Monday night, according to church officials.

Bishop Pablo Schmitz of the United States, who was shot in the arm, said that an explosion and heavy shooting blasted the pickup carrying the Roman Catholic Church workers to a meeting in northeastern Nicaragua.

But Schmitz said it was dark and he couldn't tell the attackers' identity or affiliation.

"I only know that a mine went off or a grenade and there was heavy shooting afterward," said Schmitz, 46. "We identified ourselves but nobody came to the pickup."

The leftist Sandinista government blamed US-backed rebels, known as Contras, but other church officials said they didn't know who was responsible.

Schmitz, the auxiliary Bishop of Bluefields, said the group was ambushed Monday afternoon in a place called Ojo de Agua, outside the town of Rosita 250 miles (400 kms) northeast of Managua in the northeastern province of Zelaya.

An isolated area with few roads, northeastern Nicaragua is a stronghold of the Miskito Indians and an autonomous part of the Contra resistance. Bluefields, Nicaragua's main

Caribbean Port, is about 100 miles (160 kms) south of Puerto Cabezas.

Church officials said the workers were driving through the remote region in a white pickup with yellow crosses painted on the sides.

Schmitz said the group had gone from Puerto Cabezas to the town of Sinuá, but were ambushed as they drove on to Rosita for a meeting.

Traveling in a convoy with them was Bishop Salvador Schieffler, who stayed behind in Sinuá, he said.

Asked if the attackers were rebels, Schmitz said he didn't know because "it was very dark outside."

Regional Deputy Commander Julio Rugama contended that the church workers were ambushed by about 60 rebels who operate in the region.

مكذاه الأهل

US will pull out some troops from S. Korea

Misconduct by disgraced Chun is a 'closed chapter'

SEOUL, Jan 3, (AP) — The United States and South Korea are near an agreement to withdraw 5,000-6,000 US soldiers from South Korea this year to meet US congressional demands and defence budget cuts, the Yonhap news agency reported today.

The national news service quoted unidentified Korean government sources as saying the two governments discussed restructuring the US troop presence in South Korea, including reductions in its size, in connection with a bill sponsored by US Senators Sam Nunn and John Warner.

The US 8th Army headquarters in Seoul said it would have no comment on the report.

Yonhap said relocating the Marines to South Korea was linked to the long-range idea of maintaining stability in East Asia.

One Korean official was quoted as saying the two countries shared the view that US troops were needed at the present level until there is improvement in relations between North and South Korea.

Washington repeatedly has stated that US troops will not be withdrawn as long as South Korean officials feel they are needed for defence of the country.

In another report, the daily newspaper Dong-A Ilbo reported today that for the first time this year the United States and South Korea were expected to scale back the annual "Team Spirit" military exercises to create a better atmosphere for North-South talks.

President Roh Tae-Woo of South Korea, declaring "the case closed," appealed to the nation today to stop bickering over charges of alleged misconduct by disgraced former president Chun Doo-Hwan.

Roh issued a statement declaring that disputes over the former president's alleged wrongdoings during his seven-year rule had been resolved by Chun's daylong testimony in Parliament on Sunday.

"I know that some people are not satisfied with his testimony... but if there is more to be clarified, it should be left to history," Roh said on nationwide radio and television.

He said "discussion of past issues is unproductive and must not be allowed to continue to split Korean society."

"I declare that I, as President responsible for all state affairs, will resolutely close the case regardless of who tries to make an issue of it," he said.

Roh said Chun's testimony fulfilled a "grand compromise" reached between him and opposition leaders on Dec 15. As part of the compromise, two former generals who had served under Chun — Chung Ho-Yong and Lee Hui-Sung — resigned from politics.

Although the head of the biggest opposition party wanted to charge charges brought against Chun, all other major political parties contacted by the Associated Press indicated they would not make an issue of Chun's testimony.

About 43,000 American troops, including the 2nd US Infantry Division, are stationed in South Korea under a mutual defence pact. US troops fought on the size of the South after communist North Korea invaded to start the 1950-53 Korean war.

The congressional bill sponsored by Nunn and Warner requires the US administration to report by April 1 measures to reorganise American forces in East Asia, including South Korea.

Quoting another ranking government source, Yonhap also said that the two governments were studying the possibility of relocating US marines now stationed in Okinawa to South Korea.

Beijing raps US on pupils

BEIJING, Jan 3, (Reuters) — China's education chief warned in a tough policy speech published today that Beijing might retaliate for US decisions to let Chinese students fearing persecution remain in the United States.

Li Tieying, head of the state education commission, also called for stricter political tests for Chinese students sent abroad and said some colleges would have to be merged or even closed.

His speech, carried on the front page of the People's Daily, was the latest in a string of headline education policies laid down since the government smashed student-led demonstrations for democracy in June.

"The United States has violated a Sino-US agreement on educational exchanges, and grossly interfered in our internal affairs," Li told members of China's parliament late last month and published for the first time today.

"We will be forced to take necessary action (against the US policy) at the appropriate time," he said. He did not say specifically what steps might be taken but he hinted at tighter controls on determining which students were allowed to study abroad.

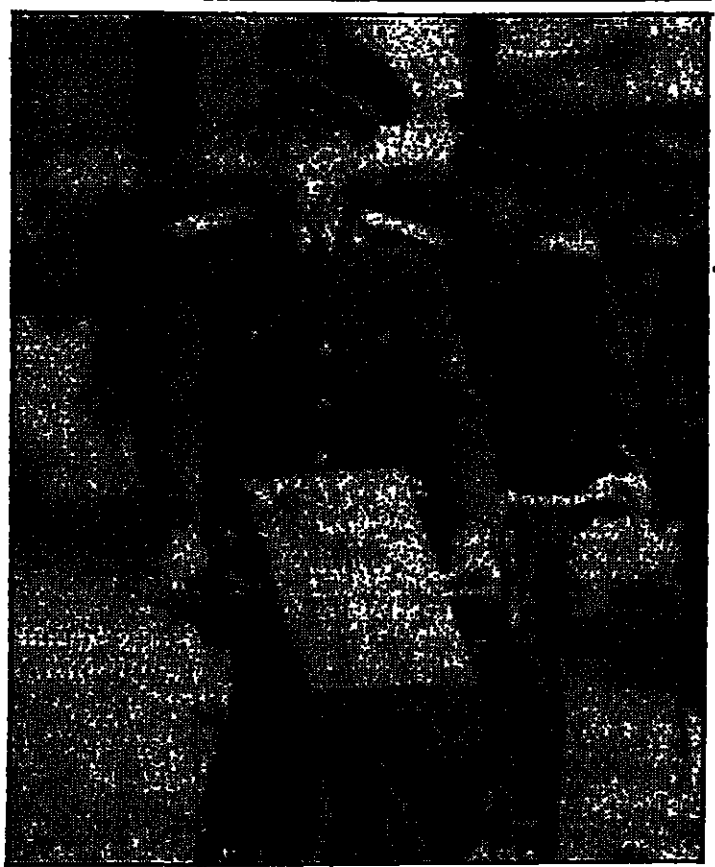
In November President George Bush vetoed a bill introduced by Congress that would have allowed all Chinese students in the United States to remain there even if their visas expired.

Legislators came up with the bill in reaction to the bloody army crackdown in Beijing.

Despite his veto, Bush promised to grant extensions to students able to show they feared persecution on return to China. Congressional leaders were nevertheless angry and said they would override the veto when they returned from recess this month.

A review board has upheld a ban on a Taiwanese documentary film about the pro-democracy movement in Beijing, fearing it might upset communist China, the board chairman said Wednesday.

The government television and entertainment licensing authority voted last month to ban a 16-minute segment from the documentary "Mainland China 1989," which was to be shown twice as part of a film programme at the Hong Kong Arts Centre.



Cycling servicemen

Members of China's People's Liberation Army (PLA) cycle in Guanzhou. One of them carries a toy Uzi machine-gun in the front basket of his cycle. (Reuters wirephoto)

Negotiations continuing

China denies deal on Fang

BEIJING, Jan 3, (UPI) — China dismissed today as "speculation" reports of a deal to free the country's leading dissident from refuge in the US embassy but Western diplomats and Chinese sources said the negotiations were continuing.

The Chinese Foreign Ministry statement came after a Hong Kong magazine reported the dissident, astrophysicist Fang Lizhi, and his wife, Li Shuxian, would be allowed to leave for Australia under an agreement negotiated with the United States.

An Australian government spokesman in Canberra denied the report. But the Chinese statement fell short of a flat denial and appeared to leave the door open for a bargain.

"The only way out for Fang Lizhi and Li Shuxian is to plead guilty immediately and mend their ways so as not to alienate themselves from the people," the Foreign Ministry said.

Speculation about the couple's release has intensified since US President George Bush's controversial initiative last month to improve relations with Beijing. The administration is known to want concessions from China to stave off sharp criticism in Congress.

Fang and Li have lived in the US embassy since taking refuge there last June 5, two days after the Chinese Army fired on pro-democracy protesters in Beijing and brutally suppressed the massive demonstrations that swept the nation last spring.

A week later, Chinese authorities issued arrest warrants for Fang and Li, charging they incited what the government has branded a "counter-revolutionary rebellion." If captured, the couple face lengthy prison terms.

"The recent rumours about the question of Fang Lizhi floating around abroad and overseas are speculation pure and simple," the Chinese Foreign Ministry statement said, reiterating that the embassy refuge was "interference in China's internal affairs."

Western diplomats and Chinese sources, although unaware of the details of the talks, said negotiations had been under way for some time and appeared to be nearing a conclusion.

The US embassy has declined to comment on Fang. Senior US officials in Beijing privately have been attempting to play down reports from Washington quoting officials as saying a deal had been concluded.

The Chinese statement appeared to leave room for some form of bargain, saying "this problem can only be solved according to the laws of China" and the United States was "obligated to work for its settlement."

Western analysts believe the Fang issue has become a dispute between moderate Chinese leaders seeking improved relations with Washington and hardliners arguing that allowing the couple's release would show a lack of resolve.

Communist Party leader Jiang Zemin told visiting Hong Kong newspaper executives last month that Fang would have to show "repentance", suggesting the leadership was seeking a face-saving device as a catalyst for releasing the couple.

The Bush administration also faces a time problem, as the US Congress resumes session Jan 23 amid simmering outrage over last month's surprise trip to Beijing by National Security Adviser Brent Scowcroft in a bid to improve relations. Critics have derided the move as "kowtowing."

US efforts to pry ousted Panamanian dictator Manuel Antonio Noriega from the Vatican embassy in Panama City may be directly complicating the fate of Fang.

10 Indonesians saved

Airliner dives

JAKARTA, Jan 3, (UPI) — Ten of 16 people aboard an Indonesian airliner that made an emergency landing in the Java Sea have been rescued from rough waters, searchers and company officials said today.

"We have received a report from rescue teams in the area that they have picked up eight survivors," a company official told United Press International.

Later, rescue officials said they received a report that a fishing vessel rescued a mother and her child.

Rescue officials said one of the survivors was the plane's co-pilot, who suffered only minor injuries in the ditching at sea. Few details of the sea landing were available.

The twin-engine Casa C-212 of Indonesia's Pelita Air Service, carrying 13 passengers and a crew of three, made an emergency landing yesterday near Pabelokan Island in the Thousand Islands chain, about 60 miles (90 km) northwest of Jakarta.

The Casa plane was en route from Palembang in central Sumatra to Jakarta on an inspection flight, officials said.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Asia

Heat wave sweeps Australia: Heat wave conditions Wednesday swept south and eastern Australia, threatening sunbathers with skin cancer and melting rubberised court surfaces at a tennis tournament in Brisbane.

Weather bureau officials said the mercury shot up to at least 109 degree Fahrenheit (43C) in some areas. In Sydney, hundreds of people were treated for heat exhaustion and doctors warned sunbathers seeking relief at the beaches they risked skin cancer with four hours of exposure in the fierce sun and heat.

Dr Greg Labood of Sydney's Prince Alfred Hospital said a mere 10 minutes in the sun between 10 am and 2 pm was enough to cause serious sunburn.

69 people executed in 1989: Taiwan executed a record 69 people in 1989, more than triple the number shot the previous year, a Justice Ministry spokesman said on Wednesday.

Taiwan law allows the death penalty for murder, rape, kidnapping, gang robbery and other serious crimes. Executions are often carried out with a shot through the heart while the criminal lies face down in a sandpit.

The spokesman said in a telephone interview 22 people were executed in 1988, and 94 people between 1978 and 1988.

The country of 20 million people has been plagued by a crime wave, with almost daily reports of robberies, kidnappings, shoot-outs and murders.

Police smash gambling den: Taiwan police have uncovered a gambling den of deaf-mutes whose most important tool was a fax machine.

Police in the central city of Hsinchu said on Wednesday they had recently smashed the ring, made up of scores of deaf-mutes from all over the island. The club's organiser, also a deaf-mute, used a facsimile machine to communicate the details of each gambling session, where speculators would wager hefty stakes on the traditional Chinese game of Mahjong.

Burma lifts martial law: Burma's military rulers have lifted a martial law order in 10 townships in northwestern Burma, the official Rangoon Radio reported.

Improved the law and order security conditions have improved in the jurisdiction of the northwest military command, martial law is hereby revoked," the radio said Tuesday, quoting from a proclamation signed by the military intelligence chief, Brig. Gen. Khin Nyunt.

A text of the broadcast was seen Wednesday in Bangkok.

\$51m spent on tear-gas: South Korean riot police have used \$51 million worth of tear gas in the past 10 years to put down various protests, according to police figures published Wednesday.

The number of tear-gas shells fired by police reached 1.87 million — an average of 511 a day — in the same period. Police here are armed with three kinds of tear gas — canisters, grenades and shells.

Last year, police introduced armoured vans carrying tear-gas cannons from Israel in an effort to reduce injuries.

Defence committee proposed: The Japanese Socialist party Saturday proposed to form a Parliament committee on disarmament to reconsider Japan's defensive policies following the ease of tension between East and West.

The leading opposition party in a statement further said that the Soviet Union could not be considered a big threat to Japan at present.

Africa

Minister dismissed: President Samuel K. Doe has fired his Internal Affairs minister and a senior local official for mishandling reports of an impending rebel invasion.

A government statement said Tuesday that Col Edward Sackor and Stephen Daniels, superintendent of Nimba county, had misled the administration about a plot to try to destabilize Doe's administration.

The statement said Sackor and Daniels recommended in October the dismissal and detention of a local chief, Jerry Gonyon, after he reported unusual activities in Nimba, where the rebels first struck. (AP)

Plan targets private sector: Nigeria, turning to the private sector for key help, launched a three-year action plan on Tuesday aimed at feeding its 100 million people and providing a new focus on social programmes.

"This plan marks the dawn of a new decade of hope to all Nigerians," said Budget and Planning Minister Alhaji Abubakar Alhaji, giving details of the 1990-92 plan and the 1990 budget unveiled by President Ibrahim Babangida on Monday. (Reuters)

S. African black schools: A dismal performance by black pupils on high school exams has jolted black communities into a search for remedies, and prompted one newspaper to call for foreign aid to ensure that blacks will be ready to govern after apartheid is abolished.

Anti-apartheid activists and black civic leaders have complained for years about problems in segregated black schools, ranging from underfunding to overcrowding to classroom violence. (AP)

Japan may send official to Phnom Penh to assess situation

BANGKOK, Thailand, Jan 3, (AP) — Japan is considering sending a government official to Cambodia for the first time since Vietnam invaded the country in late 1978, a Japanese Foreign Ministry spokesman said today.

"The Japanese government is seriously considering the possibility of dispatching a Foreign Ministry official to Phnom Penh to get first-hand information on the situation of Cambodia," the spokesman, Seiichi Kondo, told a news conference.

He was reporting on a meeting earlier in the day between Thai Prime Minister Chatichai Choonhavan and Japanese Foreign Minister Taro Nak-

ayama, who arrived in Bangkok yesterday for an official visit.

Kondo said Japan wanted the trip made "as soon as possible," but no date has been decided. Another Japanese official, speaking on condition of anonymity, said it could be next month and most likely would be made by Masaharu Kohno, a middle-ranking Southeast Asia specialist at the ministry.

It would be the first such visit since Vietnam invaded and installed another communist government to replace the Khmer Rouge government, which had killed hundreds of thousands of people. Kondo said the visit would be informal and

"does not mean that Japan recognises the... regime as the legitimate government."

A senior Australian envoy Michael Costello will meet the head of the Khmer Rouge on Thursday or Friday to try to persuade him to accept Canberra's plan to place Cambodia under temporary United Nations administration, diplomats said.

They said Costello, a deputy secretary in the department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, will meet secretly in Bangkok with Khieu Samphan, who leads the strongest of the three Cambodian resistance groups.

HUSSAIN F. AL-OMAR EST.

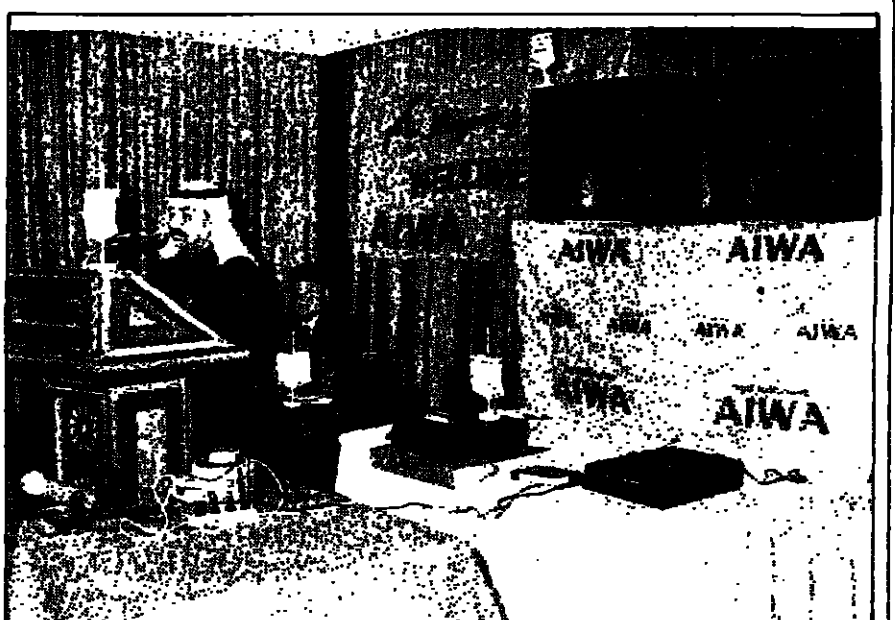
General Agents for Aiwa Electronics Co., Japan

organised a seminar recently at the Kuwait Sheraton Hotel

It was well attended by local electronic dealers and the Aiwa staff especially arrived from Japan for this seminar. Several latest Aiwa Products including VCR, VCP, Tele-video, Walkman, Car Stereos, Hi-Fi System, Cassette Decks, etc. were displayed in the function. Mr Ali H.F. Al-Omar, General Manager, opening the seminar introduced latest models which are unique in the market considering the quality and prices.

While Mr Kawasaki, Aiwa Overseas Marketing Manager, spoke on high performance of Aiwa products and Mr M. Tabata, Chief Engineer and Mr Y. Taniwaki, M.E. Manager, have demonstrated the new features of VCRs and VCPs performance combined with auto voltage power supply and digital auto tracking achievement, with advanced technology.

The function was concluded with dinner and vote of thanks was presented by Mr Ali Al Omar.



Mr Ali Al Omar & Mr Kawasaki can be seen in the above picture.



Mr Tabata, Aiwa Chief Engineer



Mr Tabata explaining the new features of Aiwa VCRs & VCPs



Mr Hussain Al Omar, chairman of Al Omar Est.

VACANCY

Library Assistant

The British Council has an immediate vacancy for a part-time library assistant (24 hours per week). Fluent English essential. Library experience and some knowledge of Arabic preferred.

Application forms to be returned by 10 January 90 and more details from the British Council, 2 Al Arabi Street, Mansouriah.

UNIVERSITY OF LONDON

G.C.E. June 1990 Examinations

Tel: 2515512/533204/533227

Candidates wishing to sit the above examination in Kuwait should apply to the British Council, behind Al-Arabi Stadium, Mansouriyah, Block 2, before 10th January 1990 at the latest. No late entries can be accepted after the closing date.

INTERNATIONAL

Crisis talks open in Sofia

SOFIA, Jan 3, (AP): Communist Party leaders today opened talks with opposition groups that could lead to a transitional government and an end to the communists' guaranteed supremacy in Bulgaria.

Delegations from the ruling communists, the Bulgarian Agrarian Party and a delegation of the Union of Democratic Forces met in the National Assembly (Parliament) the official BTA news agency said.

The talks began after the parties consulted with other public organisations and workers' unions, the agency said. It gave no other details.

The talks came after the independent trade union, Podkrepa, one of the groups in the UDF, last week threatened a general strike if the communists did not agree to share power.

Pressure
The strike, which would have been the first such work stoppage in Bulgaria since World War II, was called off after the communists agreed to the round-table talks.

But pressure for change continued, with demonstrations by several thousand students and others supporting opposition demands for more democracy and Bulgarian Turks and other Muslim demanding an end to assimilation and discrimination.

Communist leader and President Petar Mladenov, who replaced hard-line party chief Todor Zhivkov Nov 10, has pledged widespread reforms and free elections by May.

Opposition groups allowed to operate since Zhivkov's ouster have one demand in common — an end to the communists' monopoly on power.

A special parliamentary session has been moved up to Jan 15 to discuss scrapping article 1 of the constitution that guarantees the party a "leading role" in society.

But reform is complicated by ethnic tensions. The communists' decision last week to return minority rights to Bulgaria's ethnic Turkish population sparked mass demonstrations in favour and against the decision.

Separated
In Kurdzhali, some 350 kilometres (250 miles) southeast of Sofia, a committee for the defence of national interests was formed last week by communists and non-communists, to protest the decision.

In a declaration to be handed to Parliament, the committee charged that the leadership "had once again taken categorical and irreversible decisions (and) forced its dictates on the popular opinion."

After a one-day meeting of the Communist Party central committee on Friday, Andrei Lukanov, the party's second in command, advocated a separation of party and state functions and "a complete and final de-Stalinisation of the party."

He promised the communists would step down if they lost the elections.

Fate
Two months after the fall of dictator Todor Zhivkov, the Communist Party he led has not yet decided his fate.

But Lukanov said Zhivkov's future would be decided by "law ... not passion," a reference to the summary execution of Romanian dictator Nicolae Ceausescu.

Lukanov, in an interview with Reuters yesterday, also said the party had an important future role to play and the loss of its guaranteed monopoly on power did not mean the communists were ready to "self-destruct."

"The Bulgarian Communist Party has preserved not all but a great part of its heritage and its ability for politics," Lukanov said.

"How big a role and what role exactly is perhaps too presumptuous to say now but I am quite sure that it will preserve an important role in Bulgarian political life."

Lukanov, a Soviet-educated economist, was one of a new generation of reform-minded technocrats elevated to full political membership after the expulsion of Zhivkov on Nov 10 and a purge of other hardline conservatives.

Laws
Lukanov, who heads a commission of inquiry into past malpractices in "social and economic life" — a euphemism for corruption — indicated there were no immediate plans to bring Zhivkov to trial.

Referring to neighbouring Romania, where Ceausescu was executed on Dec 25 after a summary trial, he said Bulgaria would find its own way of dealing with the problem of a "personal dictatorship."

5 Lisbon ministers sacked

Heavy losses in local elections

LISBON, Jan 3, (AP): Prime Minister Anibal Cavaco Silva sacked five ministers in his center-right government today, including the architect of the government's programme to liberalise the economy, a spokesman said.

The move comes two weeks after the governing Social Democratic Party sustained heavy losses in local elections.

The government spokesman said among ministers fired were controversial Finance Minister Miguel Cadilhe, Defence Minister Eurico de Melo and Health Minister Leonor Bezeira.

Also out of the cabinet are Agriculture Minister Alvaro Baretto, and Jose Silveira

Godinho, the minister of internal administration.

All five were leading figures in the government formed after the Social Democrats won 1987 elections. Yesterday's reshuffle was the first major change to a team built to reduce state economic control and modernise the country to the levels of its partners in the European Economic Community, which Portugal joined in 1986 as the poorest member.

Press reports said De Melo resigned his positions as defence minister and deputy prime minister in protest after Cavaco Silva decided to replace the four other ministers following the party's defeat at the hands of the

Socialist Party in nation-wide municipal elections Dec 17.

In a letter to Cavaco Silva quoted by the national Lusa news agency, De Melo said his decision followed "a weakening of confidence and political support for his positions."

Cavaco Silva presented five new ministers to President Mario Soares. They include Miguel Bezeira, brother of the outgoing health minister, who is slated to be the next finance minister.

Miguel Bezeira, a director of the Bank of Portugal, supports government plans to privatise state-owned companies and reduce government control of the economy.



Havel puts his hand through the Berlin Wall during his first trip abroad since becoming President. (Reuters wirephoto)

Concrete issues discussed

Havel visits Germanys

MUNICH, Jan 3, (UPI): Czechoslovakia reform President Václav Havel met the leaders of both Germanys during brief visits to East Berlin and Munich, and said he would like to someday say "Ich bin ein Berliner" as President Kennedy did more than 26 years ago.

After talks with West German Chancellor Helmut Kohl in Munich, Havel said yesterday he decided to visit both Germanys the same day to show his approval of the recent rapprochement between the two states.

He said the visits were originally meant to have only a symbolic character "but that they turned out to be 'working visits.'"

"We managed to discuss many concrete issues" he said. During his visit to East Berlin, Havel drove past the Berlin Wall with his host, head of state Manfred Gerlach, who told him the wall would soon be pulled down.

Havel told journalists he would like to say "Ich bin ein Berliner" — "I am a Berliner" — as did President Kennedy during his visit to Berlin in June 1963, two years after the wall was built.

"I would like to take the liberty to repeat this sentence at

a new time and in a new context," Havel said during his brief visit before flying on to West Germany.

Havel said all walls and barriers in Europe must fall. In response to a question, Havel said he was opposed to the death penalty, but said last week's execution of Romanian dictator Nicolae Ceausescu and his wife may have saved many lives.

After talks with Gerlach and Prime Minister Hans Modrow, Havel praised recent developments in East Germany, which has moved away from the Stalinist policies it adhered to since its founding 40 years ago.

"All of us Europeans must thank the GDR (East Germany) for having started pulling down one of the worst walls," said Havel, a playwright and essayist, who gained prominence during the spring 1968 uprising in Prague that was crushed by Warsaw Pact tanks.

"This decade must become the decade of Europeans," said Kohl after meeting with Havel in Munich.

The Czechoslovak leader also met with Foreign Minister Hans-Dietrich Genscher, President Richard von Weizsaecker and opposition leader Hans-Jochen Vogel.

Modrow moves to appease Forum

EAST BERLIN, Jan 3, (Agencies): The interim government of communist Premier Hans Modrow promised today to keep political opponents better informed about national affairs and to consult pro-democracy forces before making important decisions.

Modrow's effort to appease disgruntled leaders of the New Forum reform movement prevented the collapse of talks between the government and opposition groups on guiding the country through the uncertain period before elections scheduled for May 6.

In what would be the first free balloting in East Germany's 40-year history, voters would select a 500-member Parliament that would choose a new government.

Because opposition forces view Modrow's communist-dominated cabinet as transitional, they contend its powers are limited and that decisions affecting important areas of national policy should take into consideration the views of grassroots reform movements.

Modrow sent Economics Minister Christa Luft to today's session of the talks to assure the nearly 20 political parties and citizens' movements they would be consulted regularly through May 6. In an apparent good-faith gesture, Luft gave a detailed account of the national economy in light of East Germany's \$20.6-billion foreign debt.

West German economic experts say East Germany's overall economic profile is much better than that of Poland or Hungary — two other Eastern European nations struggling to carry out democratic and economic reforms.

Modrow yesterday invited representatives at the talks to form an advisory committee to work with his government. The talks bring together leaders of the Communist Party and more than a dozen other political parties and citizens' groups to prepare draft legislation, constitutional reforms and other proposed changes.

New Forum leaders had threatened to withdraw from the talks, a move Modrow strongly opposed.

"If we do not succeed in building a climate of mutual trust, we will not have the proper climate for the May 6 elections, either," the official ADN news agency quoted him as saying.

The date for elections was determined at the first round of talks, in December.

Reinhold Schmidt of the East Berlin chapter of New Forum, which claims 200,000 members nationwide, told a news conference late yesterday that Modrow's cabinet had failed to keep reform activists informed about ecological, political and financial matters. The group has specifically complained about East German officials' agreeing to work with West German firms to improve nuclear power plant operations and output.

A leading East German communist warned today of new turmoil after planned free elections in May if splintered opposition groups failed to bury conflicts.

"Time is pressing... you can see the new groups are not yet ready," Wolfgang Berghofer, widely tipped as a future leader of the reformed Communist Party, told Reuters.

"If new party laws don't channel them, then the political scenery will be so multi-layered, the new parliament will be incapable of working. May 6 is not the end of the process."

Marx grave to be polished up: The West German government, concerned about the fading looks of the Father of Communism, will provide funds to polish up the grave of Karl Marx at London's Highgate cemetery, parliamentary vice-president Annemarie Renger said Wednesday.

She said West German Chancellor Helmut Kohl had arranged for the Foreign Ministry to oversee and finance the renovation of the last resting place of the German-born philosopher who died in the British capital in 1883.

Marx's grave is set in a section of the huge, rambling Victorian cemetery in the fashionable north London suburb of Highgate, that has largely been taken over by bushes and undergrowth. (UPI)

11-member team to have final say

Romanians free to travel

BUCHAREST, Jan 3, (Agencies): Romania's interim leadership today named an 11-member executive committee that apparently has the final say in running the country.

The National Salvation Front, which took over last month when a popular revolt toppled longtime communist dictator Nicolae Ceausescu, also named new government ministries and groups to oversee specific industries and functions.

The Front has said free elections would be held in April. One of the embryonic political parties forming after years of repressive rule said today that such early elections could give the Front an advantage.

A soldier was seriously wounded overnight by sniper fire, indicating that pockets of resistance remain against the forces that overthrew Ceausescu.

Hundreds of agents from Ceausescu's disbanded security police are believed armed and at large.



Women street cleaners shovel snow from the road outside the Foreign Ministry in Bucharest which is the only place in the city which maintains a presence of tanks. (Reuters wirephoto)

Arabs forced to come closer

New world order

TUNIS, Jan 3, (Reuters): Changes in Eastern Europe are helping to push Arab states closer together in a defensive reaction to a new world order unlikely to work in their favour, Arab and East bloc officials say.

The changes of the last few months have only accelerated a trend which began several years ago when the Soviet Union took a fresh look at its role in the Middle East and concluded it did not have the economic muscle to sustain it.

Many Arabs see the United States as a strategic ally of Israel in Middle East and, by extension, anti-Arab.

The officials say Washington has been taking advantage of Soviet retrenchment, upsetting the traditional balance of interests in the region, the officials say. "Unfortunately the United States is still using developments in Eastern Europe to strengthen its previous policy," Adnan Omran, Arab League assistant secretary general, told Reuters.

One PLO official said the United States remained a major player in the region while the Soviet Union was no longer there.

"On the contrary it (the US) has strengthened its involvement... US hostility to the Palestinian cause has increased considerably," he added.

"This has encouraged the Arab states to move towards rapprochements. Inter-Arab relations are better than they have been for some time," said the PLO who specialises in relations with Eastern Europe.

"Recent developments (in superpower relations) show that the Arab states are in a better position to understand the importance of unity... they can see that unity alone enables them to defend their own interests," added Omran.

"(The Soviet Union) does not care anymore. It looks after itself. It has left us, all these small peoples... to face their fate. These small people will unite and form an international platform," Libyan leader Muammar Khaddafi said in October.

The most dramatic rapprochement in the Middle East was that between Egypt and Syria last month. The two countries, which fought Israel together in 1967 and 1973, had been at odds for more than a decade over Egypt's separate peace with Israel.

Arab officials say they expect other rapprochements to follow in quick succession. The main surviving rows are those between Syria and the PLO and between Syria and Iraq.

The PLO says it hopes to send a delegation led by its foreign affairs chief Farouk Kaddoumi on a reconciliation trip to Damascus in the near future, possibly this month.

In addition to fears of an unfettered United States in alliance with Israel, the latest changes in Eastern Europe have added concern that the new governments will end their diplomatic support for the Arabs in their conflict with Israel.

Hungary has already restored diplomatic relations with Israel and other states likely to follow suit.

"Peoples freed from the dictatorship of one-party rule cannot but take the opposite tack to the choices made by the despised regimes which have collapsed. It was logical that the 'pro-Arab option' of these regimes should be questioned," said Hamadi Essid, the Arab League representative in Paris.

Arab sensitivities on this score were especially aroused when the East European media reported rumours of Libyans, Syrians and Palestinians fighting in Romania alongside secret police loyal to executed president Nicolae Ceausescu.

Arab officials said Israel's sympathisers had deliberately spread the rumours to poison relations between the Arabs and Romania's new rulers.

The PLO official said the organisation regretted the growing contacts between Israel and Eastern Europe but did not think the East Europeans would abandon support for a Palestinian state.

"The PLO regrets anything that eases the position of Israel. It enables Israel to remain intransigent," he said.

The sudden increase in Jewish emigration from the Soviet Union is another by-product of liberalisation which could be damaging to Arab and especially Palestinian interests.

Israelis are expected to receive up to 300,000 Soviet Jews over the next three years and many of these may be settled among Palestinians in the occupied West Bank.

"We don't feel it will help peace in the region. We hope the Soviet Union will reconsider and postpone it until there is a just peace in the Middle East," said Adnan Omran.

But PLO and East bloc officials said they doubted the exodus would reach such proportions. "As personal freedoms spread in the Soviet Union, emigration will fall," said a PLO official.

"The Soviet Union has little sympathy to offer the Arabs in their dilemma. The Arabs are always telling Moscow their problems are the most important in the world. Unfortunately that's not the way Moscow sees it," said an East bloc diplomat.

Brzezinski urges Poles, Czechoslovaks to form federation

WARSAW, Jan 3, (UPI): Former US national security advisor Zbigniew Brzezinski said yesterday Poland and Czechoslovakia should form a federation to protect themselves from the Soviet Union on one side and a reunited Germany on the other.

"The geopolitical and economic situation indicates there should be co-operation between Slovaks, Czechs and Poles," Brzezinski, who was born in Warsaw, said in Polish on a live radio call-in programme originating in Washington, DC.

A stand should be taken on the formation of a federation of Czechoslovakia and Poland, "be con-

tinued. "The new Czechoslovak authorities have a friendly stand on Solidarity and under the new situation the vacuum should be filled between Germany and Russia."

The Polish-language programme originated in Voice of America studios in Washington and included questions from Polish reporters in the studios of Polish radio in Warsaw.

A federation between the two countries was proposed and discarded between World War I and World War II, but interest in the idea has been revived in recent months as political changes and reforms have swept across Eastern Europe.

Czechoslovakia and Poland combined would have 55 million people and a territory surpassing that of the combined German states, which together have a population of 80 million people.

East and West Germany, divided since World War II, have not made any definitive move toward reunification but are especially concerned about a unified Germany, partly because they have not forgotten that 6 million Poles died in World War II and also because some voices in Germany are demanding return of once-German territory awarded to Poland after the war.

MIDEAST

Turkey may cut size of army

ANKARA, Jan 3, (Reuters): Turkey may reduce the size of its armed forces in the light of East-West developments but plans to push ahead with an ambitious military modernisation programme, defence officials said.

"After there is agreement at the CFE (conventional forces in Europe) talks it is possible we may reduce our forces," General Necip Torumtay, chief of Turkey's general staff, told Reuters.

He did not indicate any possible size of cut in the 660,000-strong armed forces, which guard one third of NATO's frontiers with Warsaw Pact countries and are the largest in the alliance after the United States.

Western military sources said Turkey, which borders the Soviet Union, Bulgaria, Iran, Iraq, Syria and Nato ally Greece, could afford a cut of up to 150,000 men.

"Such a cut would not affect Turkey's combat capability," one source said.

"There are quite a few troops, sailors and airmen doing tasks such as shoe-cleaning and waiting at officers' clubs."

The 23-nation CFE talks in Vienna, trying to negotiate force reductions from the Atlantic to the Urals, are widely expected to end in agreement later this year.

Troop reduction is a sensitive issue in Turkey.

Some opposition parliamentarians, who frequently point with concern to three

military interventions in domestic politics between 1960 and 1980, want reductions and facilities earmarked for military construction to be used for civilian purposes.

But officials said Turkey, still using some World War Two vintage warships and 40-year-old US-designed battle tanks, would continue a \$10-billion drive for modern equipment, including armoured vehicles and US-designed F-16 fighter jets.

"Greece is the only democratic country among our neighbours. You cannot know who will do what, and when," Defence Minister Sefa Gıray told reporters this week.

Parliament last week approved a calendar 1990 defence budget equivalent to \$3.4

billion, double last year's figure and about 13 per cent of the total national budget.

Gıray, of the centre-right Motherland Party which has held office since three years of army rule ended in 1983, appeared to rule out any quick reduction in the armed forces.

"Iraq uses \$20 billion of its \$50 billion budget for military expenditure. Our neighbours also spend more than us," he said.

"Given these conditions, a reduction in the number of troops and in the period of military service cannot be thought of. Our troops are not much if we consider our territorial integrity and population," he added.

Aoun aide escapes attempt on life

BEIRUT, Jan 3, (Reuters): Gunmen tried to assassinate a senior officer loyal to defiant Christian General Michel Aoun at dawn today, killing five people but missing the man they sought to kill, security sources said.

Lieutenant-Colonel Adel Sassin was away from his home in the Christian mountain town of Broumana when the attackers opened fire with machineguns and rocket-propelled grenades.

Sassin is head of military police in the Lebanese army units loyal to Aoun.

It was the first reported assassination attempt against an official loyal to Aoun since the general refused to submit to the authority of Lebanon's President Elias Hrawi and rejected the appointment of General Emile Lahoud as new army chief.

Four of those killed were soldiers guarding the residence of Sassin, a Greek Orthodox, in the village, "eight" miles (13 kilometres) east of Beirut, Aoun's command said in a communique.

It identified the fifth casualty as Saliba Youssef, a Christian civilian whose gunshot body was found in a pine forest near Sassin's house.

Police said they believed Youssef was one of the attackers.

The sources said rockets destroyed one room, and the "thundering" gunfire then opened fire on a tent where several soldiers were sleeping. Four soldiers were killed and three wounded.

Witnesses said the fleeing gunmen shot dead a civilian who saw the attack.

Hrawi was elected president by Christian and Muslim deputies on Nov 24 shortly after a bomb blast killed newly-elected President Rene Mouawad.

Reforms needed for unity, says South Yemen

ABU DHABI, Jan 3, (Reuters): South Yemen's Prime Minister Youssef said No'man was quoted today as saying a planned merger with North Yemen needed more democratic reforms.

"We feel that continuation of reforms is the only way to achieve unity," he told the United Arab Emirates daily Al Khaleej newspaper.

"To ensure a guaranteed approach to unity, we have to intensify moves for democracy and reforms," No'man said.

Leaders of North and South Yemen signed a draft constitution in Aden in Nov 30, 1989, setting a one-year timetable for unification in a multi-party state.

Marxist South Yemen has already begun moves towards political pluralism after years of one-party rule. North Yemen has no political parties.

North Yemen's Foreign Minister Abdul Karim Al Iryani said in remarks published yesterday that Marxism was an alien creed and stressed that plans to unite the countries included multi-party politics.

Aden's Marxism "was a constant danger for the neighbouring (political) systems of the region," Iryani said.

Egypt to build F-16 jetfighters

KUWAIT, Jan 3, (Kuna): Egyptian State Minister for Military Industries Jamal Al Sayyed was quoted here today as saying Cairo was now meeting the military hardware requirements of several Arab and African countries.

Egypt has successfully developed various types of advanced weaponry which combine the best qualities of eastern and western arms, the minister told a Kuwaiti daily newspaper in an interview.

Al Sayyed boasted that Egypt was in the process of producing the world's latest type of tanks, the US-built M-4, and has won a contract to build the US F-16 jetfighter.

PLO separates warring Shiites

Lebanon freezes arms talks

KFAR HATA, Lebanon, Jan 3, (Agencies): Commandos loyal to Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat deployed at a frontline in South Lebanon today to separate warring Shiite militias and keep fighting away from refugee camps.

Security sources said the battles between the pro-Syrian Amal and Iranian-backed Hezbollah eased when 300 men of Arafat's mainstream Fatah movement deployed at a strategic hill in Iqlim Al Tufah, 40 km (25 miles) south of Beirut.

They said the move was not previously agreed by the battling Shiite militias, but they ordered their fighters not to open fire at the Palestinian commandos.

Palestinian sources said the deployment aimed at keeping the 12-day-old fighting away from the camps of Ain Al Hilweh and Miyeh Miyeh, a few km (miles) north of Iqlim Al Tufah and the settlements, Arafat's strongest base in Lebanon.

Security sources said Arafat feared that Hezbollah, which gained the upper hand in the fighting and captured five villages, would provide support to anti-Arafat Palestinians in the camps.

Amal still controlled Kfar Hata and two nearby hills.

Amal and Hezbollah officials refused to comment on the deployment. Neither militia keeps good relations with Arafat.

An Amal field commander told Reuters he had orders from the militia's chief Nabih Berri not to open fire on the PLO force.

Berri said he would not observe a truce until Hezbollah left newly-captured positions and refused the deployment of any disengagement force.

Witnesses said the calm was breached by sporadic rounds of artillery as the rival militiamen crept out of their trenches.

The sources said Hezbollah handed over to the Palestinians a strategic hill they had captured.

Amal ousted Hezbollah from South Lebanon in April 1988 and the pro-Iranian radicals

Aoun says his accounts no secret

PARIS, Jan 3, (AP): Gen. Michel Aoun, the Lebanese Christian leader, said today his French bank accounts were no secret, but may be closed now that they have been disclosed in new reports.

The satirical weekly Le Canard Enchaîné published in today's edition a reproduction of a bank statement showing two US dollar accounts in Aoun's name at the Banque Nationale de Paris, one with a balance of \$500,000, the other with \$14.7 million.

"It's not a secret for anyone. It's an open secret," Aoun said today in an interview on the state-run radio station France-Inter.

He said he had accounts in other French banks, as well as in the United States and Lebanon.

Aoun said the news reports of his account "displeased me so much that I want to close the accounts in France, withdraw the money tomorrow morning."

retaliated by driving Amal from Beirut's southern suburbs a month later.

The government said today it has suspended negotiations to buy arms from the United States, France, Italy, Belgium and Holland.

A government statement said Lebanese diplomatic missions in Washington, Paris, Rome, Brussels and Amsterdam have been instructed to "freeze current and scheduled negotiations for arms, spare parts and ammunition" for the Lebanese Army.

All military shipments to the Lebanese Army have been halted, the statement said.

The military attaché's office of these missions were suspended, the statement said. It mentioned no figures.

It was released by the press office of Prime Minister Salim Hoss, who doubles as foreign minister in President Elias Hrawi's government of national reconciliation.

Xmas Sudan clashes kill 200

KHARTOUM, Jan 3, (Reuters): Nearly 200 people, including women and children, were killed in central Sudan after a row over Christmas holidays, a senior government official said today.

He said the clashes last Thursday were sparked by the killing of a Muslim farmer by his southern employee after an argument over the length of the Christmas holiday for Christian southern labourers.

Muslims armed with machine-guns and shotguns raided a shanty town housing southerners in the town of El Jebelina some 350 km (220 miles) south of Khartoum.

They killed 182 and wounded 35. Most victims belonged to the southern Nilotic Shilluk tribe.

Four Muslims were killed and police arrested 17.

The official said Muslim and southern elders in the area have started a reconciliation meeting sponsored by the government and that relief supplies were on their way to the town.

Sudan's decision to suspend relief work in the war-torn south is causing hunger in several areas and threatening to drive some 100,000 people from their homes to seek food, foreign aid officials said today.

They said the suspension, ordered in late October by the military government, was also preventing relief organisations from distributing badly-needed seeds in the south this month.

"We are not expecting a tragedy of a size similar to that of 1988, but unless the suspension ends before the end of January, we are going to have a very serious problem," the Sudan head of a major international relief organisation said.

The relief officials said up to 100,000 people from the northern part of the southern Bahr Al Ghazal region were expected to leave their homes in January to search for food elsewhere.

An exodus of that size has proven catastrophic in the past. Thousands perished from hunger, disease and exhaustion during journeys on foot to northern Sudan or Ethiopia in 1988.

Some 250,000 people died of hunger or disease that year in the south where guerrillas of the Sudan's People's Liberation Army (SPLA) have fought the government for nearly seven years.

An estimated 3.5 million southerners — more than half the population of the vast, predominantly non-Muslim south, have so far fled the region seeking food and security.

Sudan has asked Egypt to persuade the rebels to attend peace talks in Cairo.

Saudia plane stuck in mud

TUNIS, Jan 3, (Reuters): A Boeing 747 of the Saudi airline Saudia has been stuck in mud at the end of a runway at Tunis airport since a mistimed landing last Sunday, civil aviation sources said today.

The plane, on a flight from Jeddah to Casablanca via Tunis, touched down too far along the runway and ran off the end, they said.

There were no injuries among the passengers and little damage to the aircraft, they added.

Amnesty possible for ethnic Turks: Bulgarian diplomat

ISTANBUL, Jan 3, (Agencies): A Bulgarian diplomat said today his government planned to free ethnic Turks jailed for opposition to a now discredited assimilation campaign.

Consul Nicolay Buvucukov announced the proposed amnesty for political prisoners as more Bulgarians in the southern town of Kurdzhali demonstrated against the repeal of the five-year assimilation campaign.

"The new leadership of the Bulgarian Communist Party is now openly and sincerely telling the truth. It will strive for equal rights for every citizen without considering religion or race," Buvucukov told a news conference in Istanbul.



Armed Palestinians
Heavily armed Palestinian commandos flock around a fire in South Lebanon after taking positions between rival Shiite militias. (Reuters wirephoto)

'Jews, Arabs should live in peace'

Hamas founder on trial

GAZA, Jan 3, (Agencies): A crippled Islamic fundamentalist leader charged with ordering the killing of Israeli soldiers and suspected Palestinian collaborators told reporters before his trial today Jews and Arabs should live in peace together.

"Jews and Arabs should live together in peace," the accused mastermind of the Islamic fundamentalist movement Hamas, Sheikh Ahmed Yassin, told reporters as he was pushed in a wheelchair into court by soldiers amid tight security.

The Palestinian leader, paralysed from the neck down, is charged with founding Hamas (Arabic for zeal) at the beginning of the Palestinian uprising against Israeli rule in December 1987.

Yassin, 54, is accused of ordering the death of suspected Palestinian collaborators and recruiting the killers of two Israeli soldiers, Avi Sasporas and Ilan Saadon.

Soldiers carried him from a holding cell to his wheelchair and pushed him into the Gaza military court to hear the 15-count indictment against him.

The trial was moved from the regular courthouse to a special building just north of Gaza for security reasons.

"I deny all charges," Yassin whispered to reporters in the courtroom in Gaza city.

His lawyer, Abdul Malik Bahane, told the court that Yassin founded Hamas, and helped transfer funds to the organisation.

"My client says it is not just his right but his obligation to establish these organisations to battle the occupation," Bahane said. "He's also not sorry for what he did."

Jerusalem Post fires newsmen

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM, Jan 3, (Reuters): The Jerusalem Post has dismissed 20 senior editors and journalists who had asked to leave unless the newspaper's publisher resigned or was fired by the daily's Canadian owners.

The Post's decision to dismiss the staff members was swift, coming just a day after the journalists tendered their conditional resignations. President and publisher Yehuda Levy said he had no intention of quitting.

Twenty editors and reporters, including managing editor David Landau and the Post's entire economics staff, were dismissed. Twelve were told to leave the premises within hours of receiving their dismissal notice, staff said.

Four other reporters joined the walkout yesterday, including one who called in his resignation from Bucharest, where he was on assignment.

The influential English-language Post has been in turmoil since editor Erwin Frenkel resigned last week accusing Levy, publisher since July, of interfering in editorial operations of the dovish newspaper.

Levy has said the Post should give wider coverage to right-wing views but has denied accusations that he wants to control or alter the editorial line of the daily, which has been highly critical of rightist Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir.

The families of Saadon and Sasporas and Yassin's relatives crowded into the courthouse under heavy guard by troops and border police.

The indictment said Yassin incited violence, wrote Hamas leaflets which direct activities of the uprising, and incited religious fanaticism, the killing of Arabs suspected of collaborating with Israel.

The frail Yassin, paralysed following a teenage sports accident, is regarded by many of his followers as something between a sage and a saint.

He was jailed once before by Israel before the uprising for storing weapons in his Gaza mosque but was freed in a 1985 prisoner swap.

According to the indictment, Yassin unified two existing Islamic groups in Gaza, Al Mujahideen Al Palestine (the Palestinian fighters) and Al Majid (glory), under the umbrella of Hamas, appointed area commanders and organised the supply of funds.

The indictment said he ordered the killing of at least three Palestinians in 1987 for collaborating with the Israeli secret police and moral degeneracy.

Yassin has been in prison since May awaiting trial.

19 wounded in unrest

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM, Jan 3, (Agencies): Troops shot and wounded 19 Palestinians yesterday in the occupied territories, including six children under the age of 14, Arab hospital officials said.

Also yesterday, troops demolished one home and sealed two other houses in the occupied West Bank town of Jericho, an army spokesman said.

He said the houses belonged to Palestinians whose family members are suspected of killing a fellow Arab, they believed collaborated with Israeli authorities.

The army also said the Palestinians hurled firebombs at military vehicles and belong to outlawed Palestinian organisations.

In the occupied Gaza Strip, troops shot and wounded 16 Palestinians, including a 22-year-old Arab who suffered a

serious gunshot wound to the head, Arab reporters said.

An army spokesman said the man was wounded after troops opened fire on stonethrowing youths. He was rushed to Israel's Tel Hashomer hospital where he is in critical condition, the spokesman said.

Arab reporters identified the wounded Palestinians as Ala Yassin of the Nusseirat refugee camp.

The wounded also included four children under the age of 14 who were shot in the legs. Another youth, 12-year-old Shadi Ashur, was rushed to Gaza's Shifa hospital with a bullet wound in the abdomen, Arab hospital officials said.

Egypt today renewed its condemnation of the Jewish state's crackdown on Palestinians protesting its occupation of the West Bank and Gaza.

In a statement to journalists,

Foreign Minister Esmat Abdel-Meguid cited the report by Amnesty International saying it fears that the Israeli government condones and encourages the illegal killing of Palestinians by its soldiers.

Israel today dismissed as "outrageous nonsense" an Amnesty International report accusing it of encouraging security forces to kill Palestinians during unrest in the occupied areas.

A Palestinian official has described the dialogue between the United States and the PLO as "a dialogue between two enemies."

Sakhr Hashab, a member of the central committee of the PLO's mainstream faction, Fatah, said in Abu Dhabi last night that the "Palestinian leadership was aware that the US administration was trying to exploit the dialogue to get more PLO concessions."

Police, militants clash in Egypt

ASSIUT, Egypt, Jan 3, (AP): Five Muslim militants were injured in clashes with police here yesterday, a senior security official said.

Maj. Gen. Hassan Abeido, security director of Assiut province, said the clashes began when about 130 Muslim fundamentalists tried to leave a police-besieged mosque to march to the city centre to demonstrate against the government.

Police used tear-gas bombs to disperse the demonstrators and arrested 30 of them, Abeido said.

He said the arrested were referred to the prosecution office which ordered them remanded to custody for 15 days under charges of resisting authorities, illegal possession of arms and unlawful assembly.

Prosecutors charged 78 Muslim militant students with anti-government activity last month but

ordered the release of 82 others arrested after a riot and shootout with police in this southern city.

Unauthorised public gatherings and demonstrations are banned throughout Egypt under an emergency law in effect since Muslim fundamentalists assassinated President Anwar Sadat Oct 6, 1981.

Assiut, 238 miles (380 km) south of Cairo, has been a hot-bed of militant activity since Muslim extremists of a group called Jihad attacked security offices and police stations two days after Sadat's assassination. More than 80 people, mostly policemen, were killed.

Since then, militant university students have clashed with police and also attacked colleagues for organising mixed-sex parties and excursions that they consider contrary to Islamic teachings.

Police suppressed peaceful protests for Muslim rights

Many of the ethnic Turks who fled Bulgaria have since returned there, saying they found life much harder in Turkey.

The Bulgarians in Kurdzhali are angry at the decision by the country's new communist leaders to grant religious rights to Turks and allow them to use Muslim names.

Local communist authorities in Kurdzhali, a predominantly Turkish town of 50,000 people, decided on Saturday to defy the ruling central committee's decision to overturn the policy of forced assimilation.

Khalifa, Mubarak discuss Arab, global issues

Egypt-Qatar bonds stronger

CAIRO, Jan 3. (Kuna): Visiting Amir of Qatar Sheikh Khalifa Bin Hamad Al Thani today met with Arab ambassadors in Cairo and later accompanied President Hosni Mubarak on a visit to Sharm Al Sheikh in Sinai for an inspection visit to a number of industrial projects in the area.

Following the meeting with the Arab diplomats, Sheikh Khalifa told reporters that the talks touched on the outcome of his discussions with Mubarak which included Arab, Islamic and international issues topped by the Palestinian question.

On the Qatari-Egyptian relations, Sheikh Khalifa said they are significant and that he had agreed with Mubarak to push those relations forward.

On Qatari-Egyptian co-operation, Sheikh Khalifa pointed out the Qatari participation in a number of Egyptian projects.

On possible future co-operation between the Gulf Co-operation Council and the Arab Co-operation Council, Sheikh Khalifa replied "why not since all GCC leaders have visited Egypt."

The Amir of Qatar, on his first visit to Egypt in 18 years, held a round of talks with President Mubarak while ministers from the two countries concluded a number of co-operation agreements covering economic, agricultural, information, transport, communications and tourist spheres.

The two sides agreed to facilitate the flow of news, television and radio programmes, and distribution of newspapers in their countries.

The agreement was initiated by the Qatari Minister of Information and Culture, Sheikh Hamad Bin Suhaim and Egypt's Information Minister Safwat Al Shari.

Minutes of the agreement and implementation will be discussed thoroughly in April in another meeting to be held in Doha, the capital of Qatar.

The information agreement followed the approval of another agreement earlier setting up a higher joint committee between Qatar and Egypt that would be responsible for enhancing co-operation between the two Arab states in different spheres.

The Qatari Foreign Minister Abdulla Bin Khalifa Al Ateya described the current visit by Sheikh Khalifa to Egypt as being "very successful" and said it would certainly yield outstanding results that would benefit the peoples of the two countries.

He told reporters after signing the agreement on setting up the joint co-operation commission with his Egyptian counterpart Dr Esmat Abdel Megud that the bonds between Qatar and Egypt were stronger than any agreements.

He stressed that there was continuous co-ordination between the two leaderships over all Arab national issues, especially on the Palestinian cause "for which Egypt was exerting sincere and faithful efforts," he said.

The Amir of Qatar, who started his current four-day state visit to Egypt on Monday, last night attended an artistic show at the opera house and later on took the underground train, accompanied by President Mubarak, from Cairo's central square "Maidan Al Tahrir" to the Qobba Presidential Palace.



The Amir of Qatar, Sheikh Khalifa Bin Hamad (left) and Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak wave to the cheering crowds as they passed through the town of Ismailia. (Reuters wirephoto)

NEWS IN BRIEF

Envoy farewell

DEPUTY Premier and Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Al Ahmed yesterday received Charge d'Affaires in Syria's embassy to Kuwait Lutfi Nour Eddin who called to bid him farewell on the expiry of his term of office here.

The Syrian diplomat paid a similar visit to State Minister for Foreign Affairs Saoud Mohamed Al Ossaimi.

Sheikh Sabah

DEPUTY Premier and Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Al Ahmed received Social Affairs Minister Sheikh Nasser Mohammed Al Ahmed Al Jaber and chairman and members of Al Farwaniya governorate's council.

Sheikh Sabah also received Kuwait's ambassadors to Damascus, Tunisia, Aden, Ahmed Abdul Aziz Al Jassem, Abdul Mohsen Al Janan and Fawzi Al Jassem respectively as well as the counsellor of Kuwait's embassy to Washington Sheikh Ali Abdulla Al Ahmed.

Relief call

JEDDAH, Jan 3. (Kuna): Secretary-General of the Organisation of Islamic Conference (OIC) Hamed Al Ghabed has called on all countries, Islamic organisations and societies to send urgent relief for Afghan mujahideen.

Ghabed said last night that the Afghan mujahideen are facing a critical situation, specially in the north, where many children died because of a cold wave and hunger.

ACC meeting

CAIRO, Jan 3. (Kuna): Supreme Council of the Arab Co-operation Council (ACC) will hold a meeting next February, on the occasion of the first anniversary of the four-member council, Radio Cairo said today.

The meeting will group ACC leaders of Egypt, Iraq, Jordan and Yemen Arab Republic.

Meanwhile, Egyptian Prime Minister Atef Sedki stated that the next ACC ministerial council meeting will be held Jan 16 in Baghdad.



Governor of Jahra Sheikh Ali Abdallah Al Sabah received yesterday the State Minister for Cabinet Affairs, Rashed Al Rashed and Minister of Justice, Dhari Al Othman. He discussed with the ministers ways of improving services at the governorate. Sheikh Ali later received director-general of the Installations Security and Special Forces Department, Brig. Yousef Al Mishari.

Joint Arab industrial projects

Official explains aims, objectives

THE director-general of the Arab Organisation of Industrial Development and Mining Dr Hatem Abdul Rasheed has said that the organisation is performing the tasks of three national organisations specialised in joint Arab industrial work. These are the Arab Organisation for Industrial Development, the Arab Organisation for Specifications and Standardisation, and the Arab Organisation for Mineral Resources.

He told a local daily that the organisation's primary aim is to effect full and integrated industrial trading co-ordination at a pan-Arab level.

Tools employed by the organisation to fulfil its objectives are to encourage launching of joint Arab industrial enterprises through increasing investment opportunities.

Locating the right link between Arab developing countries and industrially advanced countries.

He also said that this would facilitate industrial development through the transfer and adaptation of advanced technologies into the Arab world.

He stressed the need to establish a solid industrial base at each Arab country based on its individual economic, political and social characteristics. He further called for supporting strategic industries that would function as the supporting power for other industries to flourish.

He attributed the poor growth of Arab industries to the lack of effective co-ordination and existing industrial duplication at the individual, regional and national level.

He added that this is due to existing discrepancies in the growth rates in the Arab countries, differences in natural resources, insistence by some countries on individual attempts and fear of venturing into pan-Arab industrial spheres along with unhealthy competition.

He pointed out that Arab industrial development had missed out golden chances for growth and progress over the past two decades.

These are characterised by abundance of financial resources, better international conditions, healthier world political climate and better development prospects.

He warned against the repercussions of continued industrial under-development throughout the 1990's, particularly amidst increasing world demand for Arab raw material and the availability of cheap Arab labour.

He added that the current changes in the political spheres in West Europe and the reconciliation of major world powers would definitely be at the expense of developing, Arab countries. The new economic or political changes in the world will not serve Arab interests, the official said.

Communication Ministry's Kuwaitisation plan

ABDUL Aziz Al Ayoub, undersecretary at the Ministry of Communications said, the ministry is going ahead with its plan to develop the administrative and technical staff by re-organising its administrative sections and giving more authority to departments to decentralise.

The official said that the ministry is following a policy of employment that focuses on depending on Kuwaiti qualifications and has contributed to increasing the number of Kuwaiti employees at the ministry. However, he clarified that this increase is limited due to the expansion in the services of the ministry.

He said that Kuwaiti employees are very choosy about the type of employment they take up and cited

the instance of employees refusing to work in distribution of telegrams and letters and as office-boys or correspondents.

Nevertheless, he said the number of Kuwaiti employees in the ministry have increased from 3,373 in 1985/86 to 5,383 in the present fiscal year and non-Kuwaitis reduced from 4,622 in the same period to 3,134. Kuwaiti employees formed 47.8 per cent of the total staff in 1985/86 which increased to 63.2 per cent this year.

Ayoub pointed out that the ministry welcomes Kuwaiti graduates specialised in administration. A programme for each graduate is provided to inspect the different departments and sections of the ministry for a period of one month to select the department of their choice.

Tax exemption

KUWAIT and Libya yesterday agreed to exchange tax and custom exemption on air transport between them.

Kuwait Finance Ministry Undersecretary Abdelmuhssen Yousef Al Huneif and Libyan ambassador to Kuwait signed the agreement which aims at strengthening bilateral relations.

A Finance Ministry statement said the agreement is designed to avert double taxation.



The Egyptian and Qatari foreign ministers shake hands after signing agreements of co-operation between the two countries yesterday. (Reuters wirephoto)

Future vision for GCC economies

Participants debate basic issues

THE cultural season organised recently by the Gulf and Arab Peninsula Centre on the theme "Gulf Co-operation Council's countries - The Reality and Aspirations" concluded on Monday.

The final seminar was devoted to debating the view of the lecture delivered by Abdul Latif Al Hamad, chairman and director general of the Arab Fund for Economic Development (AFED) on the theme of "Future Vision for GCC Economies during 1990s".

In his comments, Dr Adnan Al Sultan of the Economics Department at Kuwait University, said that the GCC oil resources should not be considered as being inexhaustible as this is a finite source of energy and the day will come when these sources of wealth will be exhausted.

Specifically, he said, the lecturer had ignored the support of the government when discouraging growth rates and cited the example where the cost of cultivating wheat was higher than imports and furthermore, negatively affected water levels of the member states.

Speaking on the workforce in the GCC countries, he said that it is marginal and does not possess the needed technical know-how. This lack of expertise in the workforce makes these workers unproductive and consequently causes a burden on the state's finances.

He added that we have to select industries that are complementary with our economics and recommended that the financial

sector be given a major role in contributing to the development process. "The financial sector will constitute the future substitute when resources of the oil sector diminish," Sultan said.

Abdullah Al Nibari, the Kuwaiti economist, lauded the statistics provided by the lecturer and commented that these could constitute a basis of reference for researchers. He called for the industrial sector to be provided with added incentives to develop and recommended that oil derivative industries should be excluded as a means of diversifying the economy.

Nibari described the problem of unemployment among Kuwaiti graduates as critical and attributed it to the educational policy. He confirmed the importance of linking the development process with that of the educational policy and the ability to upgrade and make optimum use of available human resources.

Meanwhile, Mohammed Al Khadi, another Kuwaiti economist, said that the high-level increase in the Gross National Product (GNP) which amounted to 40 per cent is basically due to the increases in oil prices and does not reflect the contributions of other sectors.

He added: "This increase has negatively affected our economies and social aspects as we failed to transfer this boom in our favour by not positively responding to the challenges of the post oil boom in prices."

He reiterated that the rapid developments throughout the world make it imperative that we move towards taking appropriate action to be congruent with such developments.

Also commenting on the lecturer's view points, Dr Yusuf Al Ibrahim, from the Faculty of Commerce, Economics and Political Science of Kuwait University, expressed several reservations on the statistics as enumerated.

He clarified that the 1990s will not be a transitional period but would be a reflection of the policies adopted during the first and second oil eras. He queried the ability of member states to address the changing economic situation during this decade. He said his unoptimistic view stemmed from two factors - limitations in national expertise and time frame for achieving results. Ibrahim called for a major role to be played by the private sector in the development of all spheres of activity in the region and criticised the economic policies of the region and particularly referred to the absence of the tax system which should be based on a flexible vehicle for implementation of some policies.

He upheld the point of view of the lecturer which deemed that the GCC integration could not constitute a viable alternative to the Arab charter. He stressed on the importance of co-ordinating foreign economic policies and organisation of imports to include capital and consumer goods.

Education Ministry's diversified training course

SINCE 1962 and onwards, Ministry of Education has been according special concern to upgrading the performance of different departments, including that of teachers, technicians, and other administrative staff to keep abreast with rapid developments in the field of education.

This year's training scheme will cover about 7,000 employees who will participate in a total of 68 diversified training courses.

To highlight this issue, a local daily interviewed a number of officials accredited to the profession.

Naser Al Dhahi said that the new scheme is distinguished by its diversity and is comprehensive in keeping with modern development plans adopted by the ministry.

Training courses will cover several curriculums, including Islamic education,

Arabic, English and French languages, in addition to upgrading of vocational capabilities and mathematics. The ministry will also organise several training courses related to artistic education, librarian capabilities, social services, domestic sciences, secretarial and 13 training courses specially tailored to computers.

A specialised scheme includes a training course for management cadre where heads of divisions will be involved in gaining expertise on top-level management procedures.

Dhahi said that the ministry intends to organise a programme of field visits to several departments and schools to obtain first-hand opinion on the quality of these training courses.

Speaking of the supervisory training

course, the official said that there are 239 trainees, including 51 principals, 51 assistant principals, 66 headmistresses and 71 assistant headmistresses.

Meanwhile, the daily interviewed a number of trainees at this course.

Yusuf Al Hussaini, assistant principal at Al Rumaihiya Secondary School, described the training course as beneficial and good as it provided the trainees with valuable information related to the latest developments in the field of education.

Safiya Al Ali, assistant headmistress, said the course is useful in itself for headmistresses and their assistants and helps to keep them abreast of administrative developments which the ministry is striving to achieve. She said that trainees had benefited and called for concentrating on such workshops.

2 sentenced in absentia

THE Criminal Court sentenced two men in absentia to five-years each in jail with hard labour to be followed by deportation.

The court was told that one of the accused had relations with a girl and wanted to marry her. However, the mother refused.

In revenge, he stole the key to the flat from the daughter's purse on one of their outings and with the connivance of the other accused burgled the flat in the absence of the occupants and stole KD30,000 worth of jewellery.

Climate change baffles islanders

IT seems that the English are not the only race who start a conversation beginning with the weather in Bahrain. Nowadays Bahrainis have lately become obsessed with this natural phenomenon judging by the unpredictability of weather conditions in the country in recent years. For indeed the weather has baffled the islanders in recent times by abrupt and sometimes bizarre changes. The normal climatic factors seem no longer applicable to this beautiful Island nation and change colours faster.

For instance even in the height of summer here, hard as it may sound, the heavens may suddenly crack up and a burst of downpour may cascade. On the other hand, a spell of warm even humid weather may run through intermittently in the peak of what is supposed to be winter as right now!

But this was not always the case in the 'old days.' There used to be normal seasons in the island like everywhere else. Despite the long hot and humid summer of the Arabian climate there were good cycles of springs, autumn and winter. But now perhaps with the complexity and urgency of modern life, the weather too has decided no longer to remain 'normal.'

In the just concluding year, Bahrain experienced one of its hottest and longest summers for many years. Every year the mercury seems to shoot up higher and winter appears at times a distant dream in the island. It took so long for winter to arrive in Bahrain in 1989 that most islanders abandoned any hopes of cool days and resigned themselves to an endless summer. But when winter did arrive it took everyone by surprise, almost in a comical manner. Without any warning, which never happens anyway despite meteorological experts, it rained so heavily that islanders thought monsoon had struck. It poured incessantly for almost 3 days! It was the heaviest rainfall Bahrain experienced in 44 years. But whether it was actually cold is another matter. At least indications were that winter had come. Such is the unpredictability of the weather here that residents never know what is going to happen next. It is a mind-boggling struggle to constantly be on toes and decide whether to carry an umbrella, a raincoat, a woollen jacket and Wellington boots either separately or all at the same time.

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EDITORIALS

ARAB TIMES

Thought for today

WE always have time enough, if we will but use it right
— Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, German poet (1749-1832).

OPINION

Reactivate the economy

KUWAIT'S economy encompasses funds available with people, the state and available resources.

The economy can be developed by increasing the value of these.

Increase in value can be achieved through: real estate, stock exchange market and industries.

The second is undoubtedly the most important artery for Kuwait's economy as it holds the savings of the citizens during the past 40 years and is the real reserve of the public.

Through resolving its difficulties, many major problems, including the huge bad debts can be resolved. These debts are due to banks and are guaranteed by the state.

It will make no difference if the state pays these debts directly to the banks, or better still, through increasing the values of the traded assets in the stock market. Raising of assets' values will rescue dealers and ultimately rescue banks.

However, the Stock Exchange Market is still facing obstacles — perhaps as a result of mismanagement by officials in charge and the neglect of the government. Value of its assets are still retreating, although we reiterate that it is the most important economic sector in the country.

Concerning the real estate market, the government has spent or committed to spend over KD 1 billion — soon after the Manakha crash. This commitment has certainly strengthened the real estate market and assets.

Some of these real estates are mortgaged to local banks and any slump in value will affect local banks. As the government has guaranteed mortgaged real estates, it will mean that the government would have to make good. Though it is a continuous chain, the government is the guarantor and should pay in case of any retreat in real estate assets.

On these guarantees, real estate investors improved their situations and paid all or some of their financial commitments and returned to the market actively.

The third aspect of our economy is industries, which we have regrettably "killed" by neglecting its requirements. Kuwait could have been a very important centre for some industries had we not missed the opportunity — like we have missed many others. The recent government-sponsored economic report comes as an attempt to redress the issue of lost opportunities of industries.

Thus, before it is too late, we must concentrate on these three fields: By inducing life into them, we can reactivate our ports, tourism, contracting and other commercial and economic activities which have been damaged through misadministration and lack of flexibility.

Ahmed Al Jarallah

Cypriots seek an end to divisions

NICOSIA, Cyprus (AP): For the first time since Turkey invaded in 1974, openings are appearing in the line that divides Greek and Turkish Cypriots. Some see it as the first sign of breakthrough toward reunification.

With little fanfare, ordinary Greek and Turkish Cypriots have been in touch with each other to seek an end to 15 years of political and religious division on this east Mediterranean island.

"Contact between the two communities has been increasing," noted columnist Petros Andreou in the Cyprus Mail, an English-language newspaper published in the Greek Cypriot sector.

"At least, the two sides are beginning to understand each other's position."

Events in Eastern Europe may have inspired the grassroots trend. Since the Berlin Wall began to crumble in November several groups from the rival communities have come together for the first time in nearly 16 years.

In 1974, the Turkish Army seized the northern third of the island in the wake of a short-lived coup by those seeking union with Greece. The Muslim Turkish Cypriot minority declared the Turkish-occupied north a republic in 1983, but it is recognized only by Turkey.

Cyprus still has a long way to go before the barriers come down as they have in Europe. But columnist Andreou said the 570,000-member Christian Greek Cypriot community's growing awareness of social and economic problems is finally taking the edge off their obsession with the island's divisions.

"People are beginning to realize that there's more to life than the 'national question,'" Andreou wrote.

"Perhaps the same realization is crystallizing in the north. If it is, then it's quite probable that people will eventually begin to shed all their nationalistic fixations and instead start to deal with what is really important — how they can live in peace on this island."

Since the invasion, Rauf Denktash, president of the northern statelet, has banned Turkish Cypriots from visiting the Greek sector and refused to allow Greek Cypriots to visit the north. The Greek Cypriots have imposed no travel restrictions.

TODAY IN HISTORY

- 1762 — Britain declares war against Spain and Naples.
- 1797 — Napoleon Bonaparte defeats Austrians at Revoli, Italy.
- 1825 — Ferdinand I of Naples dies, is succeeded by Francis I.
- 1908 — Mulai Hafid is proclaimed Sultan of Morocco at Fez.
- 1919 — Russian Bolsheviks capture Riga, Latvia.
- 1932 — Japanese forces reach Shanbaikwan on Great Wall of China. Indian government introduces emergency powers as Indian National Congress is declared illegal and Mahatma Gandhi is arrested.
- 1938 — British postpone plan for partition of Palestine.
- 1944 — Allied forces launch attack east of Cassino, Italy, in world War II.
- 1948 — Union of Burma becomes independent republic.
- 1951 — North Korean and communist Chinese forces take Seoul, Korea.
- 1959 — Disturbances break out at Leopoldville, Belgian Congo.
- 1972 — Pakistan seeks talks with India after war that resulted in East Pakistan becoming independent state of Bangladesh.
- 1973 — Montreal museum of fine arts robbed of \$2 million worth of art, including a Rembrandt valued at \$1 million.
- 1988 — Palestinians clash with Israeli soldiers in flurry of protests in occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip.
- 1989 — U.S. Navy planes, reportedly threatened, shoot down two Libyan jet fighter planes over Mediterranean Sea.



Yasser Arafat



Yitzhak Shamir

Israel says no to talks with PLO

Behind-the-scenes contacts common

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM, (AP)—Israel's latest political crisis over cabinet minister Ezer Weizman's alleged contacts with Yasser Arafat posed the question of whether Israel was ready to talk peace with the PLO.

The answer was no, even though behind-the-scenes Israeli-PLO contacts have become almost commonplace.

Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir of the right-wing Likud Bloc shocked the nation Sunday by announcing he was firing Weizman, the science minister and a member of the centre-left Labour Party.

Shamir accused the former defence minister of going behind his back to meet with "Israel's most dangerous enemies." Worse, he said, Weizman gave Arafat advice on how to block Israel's attempts to the keep the PLO out of proposed peace negotiations.

Weizman said his contacts with Palestinians helped advance the peace process and said the Shin Bet security service, which reports to Shamir, was aware of his contacts.

Vice Premier Shimon Peres, the Labour leader, threatened to leave the coalition and bring down the

year-old government. But in the end his party shied away from forcing elections on the issue of talking to the PLO.

The two sides compromised: Weizman would quit the decision-making inner cabinet for at least 18 months but would keep his overall cabinet post as science and development minister.

Even though he did not carry through with the threat to fire Weizman, Shamir appeared to have strengthened his position by demonstrating that he had strong backing, even in Labour, for continuing his policy of not talking to the PLO.

Labour's failure to take up Shamir's challenge disappointed Israeli doves and leading Palestinians who have been involved in efforts to arrange Palestinian-Israeli talks and election in the occupied territories.

"This government is unable to take decisive steps for peace," said Faisal Husseini, a pro-PLO activist.

"Israel needs elections more than the Palestinians."

Amnon Rubinstein, a liberal parliament member and head of the Shinui (Chinese) Party, said the government should "come out and tell the truth that there is no chance for peace without talking to the

PLO."

But the Weizman affair pointed up the increasing difficulty the government is having in maintaining the credibility of its publicly declared policy of refusing all dealings with the PLO, which it views as a terrorist organization bent on Israel's destruction.

Weizman, 65, a longtime advocate of direct talks with the PLO, accused Shamir and even his own party leaders of hypocrisy.

He said Shamir and Defence Minister Yitzhak Rabin had sounded out peace proposals with Palestinians from the occupied territories who acted as direct conduits to the PLO. Weizman also said the Shin Bet secret service, which reports to Shamir, was fully informed about his PLO contacts and even offered him advice on what to say.

Peres, he disclosed, listed in one of Weizman's telephone calls to an Arab contact in Tunis, where the PLO is headquartered, and passed on a message urging PLO acceptance of US plans for holding Israeli-Palestinian negotiations.

Furthermore, he argued, the government was indirectly negotiating with the PLO via the United States and Egypt.

Armenian bill haunts US-Turkey ties

ANKARA, (Reuters): Disputed claims that Armenians were victims of genocide in Ottoman Turkey have cast a long shadow over Turkey's ties with the United States, its major Nato ally.

Turkey has said passage through the US Congress of a proposed bill designating next April 24 as "a national day of remembrance of the 75th anniversary of the Armenian genocide of 1915-1923" would sour relations.

The Armenian issue is one of the most sensitive in Turkey, a proud mainly Muslim but secular nation forged in 1923 from the ashes of Ottoman rule. It has repeatedly denied genocide claims.

Western diplomats do not doubt Ankara's resolve to retaliate against Washington with measures that could depress relations to their lowest level in three decades if the resolution is passed.

"Genocide or any other such claims cannot be accepted. It is a misinterpretation of the incident," a Turkish Foreign Ministry official said.

"No Turkish government could ignore the public opinion outcry if such a resolution passed," he added.

Turkey last year opened Ottoman archives to public scrutiny in the hope of refuting charges that have bedevilled Ankara's image and relations with the West for decades.

"The European church and European Christian culture have used the Armenians as a tool because they have always had the image of the 'ugly Turk,' Yulug Tekin Kurat, history professor at Ankara's Middle East Technical University, told a seminar.

Accounts based in part on contemporary reports by Europeans and Americans in eastern Turkey say up to 1.5 million Armenians were massacred after

Ottoman rulers decided in 1915 to deport them from the region.

Official Turkish history says Ottoman rulers, who sided with Germany in World War One, ordered the deportation of Armenians for alleged collaboration with invading Tatarist Russian forces.

Turkey, which officially puts the number of Armenians in the area at the time at some 1.2 million, has said that possibly 300,000 died as a result of war conditions and during the deportations. It says proportionately as many Turks died in the same period.

Some 50,000 Armenians, with 33 active churches of their own, now live in Turkey, mainly in the commercial centre of Istanbul.

Turkey, which relies heavily on US aid to modernise its armed forces on Nato's southeastern flank, says the passage of the proposed bill could revive Armenian guerrilla attacks, lead to demands for reparations and calls for an Armenian homeland.

Forty-one Turks, many of them diplomats and their relatives, were killed between 1973 and 1983 in attacks claimed by Armenian guerrilla groups.

Turkish sensitivity over the US resolution, proposed by Senate Republican leader Robert Dole, has been heightened by autonomy calls and unrest in Soviet Armenia, facing Turkey.

On the Turkish side lie the ruins of Ani, 1,000-year-old former capital of an Armenian kingdom that covered hundreds of square miles before its power waned in the Middle Ages.

Western diplomats say the Dole resolution is likely to go before Congress next month but its outcome is uncertain.

US diplomats in Ankara said they saw almost no chance of the resolution being put to one side, given the political power of its author, a one-time presidential aspirant.

"Passage of the bill will be a great blow here," a senior Ankara-based Western diplomat said.

"The Turks have taken a political position in which it will be very difficult for them not to do something if it passes. The effects are likely to be long-lasting."

"I think Turkey and the US could be entering a phase even worse than after the Johnson letter or the US arms embargo," he added.

Relations between Turkey and the United States plunged in 1966 after the then US president Lyndon Johnson warned Ankara in a letter, after fighting between Turkish and Greek Cypriots, against any armed intervention in Cyprus.

Washington imposed an arms embargo on Turkey after Turkish troops invaded Cyprus in 1974 following a short-lived coup in Nicosia inspired by the military junta then ruling Greece.

"The Johnson letter had deep-rooted effects in Turkey and caused a crisis of confidence. The embargo, which ended in 1978, also left its mark," a Turkish official said.

Turkey has urged US President George Bush to stop the bill and says it will not accept any watering down of the draft.

"It is out of the question for us to accept any concession on this issue," Foreign Minister Mesut Yilmaz said last month.

Turkey has already imposed token restrictions, including stopping some flying training and warship visits, on US military activities in Turkey.

Twenty years after Biafran war

Nigeria reconciled

UMUAHIA, Nigeria, (Reuters): Twenty years ago the world was shocked by images of starving children in Biafra, a breakaway enclave in eastern Nigeria where the Ibo people waged a doomed battle for independence from 1967 to January, 1970.

Hundreds of thousands of people died — some estimates say more than a million — in a conflict the international Red Cross at the time called the biggest emergency since World War Two.

The wounds have largely healed, but some Nigerians say black Africa's most populous country is still in search of a sense of nationhood.

"Nigeria remains in essence an amorphous mass of individuals busy pretending to be a people," former rebel leader General Eneke Ojukwu wrote in a book published last July.

There has been a remarkable reconciliation since the war, symbolised by Ojukwu's return from 13 years of exile in 1982. He now lives in a fine house in the best part of Lagos.

But for much of the war, Voice of Biafra Radio broadcast Ojukwu's defiant secessionist message from an underground bunker in Umuahia, a small town in modern Ibo state which was the rebel base until they were bombed out in April 1969.

Renovated and housing mementoes of the conflict, the bunker now forms part of a new war museum dedicated to national unity.

The leading protagonists, neatly framed in black and white, stare at each other across a concrete stairway leading down into it.

Inside hang harrowing images of starving, skeletal babies in besieged Biafra — images which wrung hearts across the globe as the war dragged on.

"We believed we had no alternative. It was die fighting or give up and be massacred," Ogbonna Ukelonu, a member of Ojukwu's wartime inner cabinet, told Reuters.

But the genocide the Ibo's feared when their shrinking, besieged domain eventually collapsed in January 1970 — beaten by the forces of the Lagos-

based federal military government headed by General Yakubu "Jack" Gowon — did not happen.

"I thought the federal commander who tracked me down with my family had come to shoot us. Instead he brought a peace message and the first beer I'd had in two years," said Ukelonu.

Ojukwu, who declined to be interviewed about the war, is not alone in believing that genuine unity among Nigeria's 100 million people is still elusive.

"We fought the war for unity, but in fact it alerted people to their roots," said Ray Ekpu, editor-in-chief of Newswatch magazine, a member of a non-Ibo minority in the east.

Awareness of ethnic group, state of origin, and above all religion, inflames conflicts over access to education and employment, and looms over the present military government's programme for a return to democracy by 1992.

"Nigeria is still basically a geographical expression, not a cohesive unit," said Ekpu, echoing a comment by a leading Nigerian nationalist before independence.

The country, plagued by a battle for power at the centre between three ethnically and religiously diverse regions, seemed destined to fall apart at the seams barely six years after independence from Britain in 1960.

Northern Muslims clung to political power at the expense of Western educated southern Christians whose dominance they feared.

Tensions exacerbated by widespread nepotism and corruption exploded in January 1966, when a group of young, mainly-Ibo Army officers struck at the northern-dominated government, wiping out the cream of its civilian and military leadership.

The supreme commander of the armed forces Major-General John Aguiyi-Ironsi, by coincidence an Ibo, tried to restore order, but retaliation by outraged northern Muslims against what they saw as an Ibo coup was brutal and indiscriminate.

"They pursued Ibos and killed them like

chickens," said Oliver Nwaeke, an Ibo domestic servant in Lagos at the time.

Before he could join the exodus of terrified Ibos trekking home, he hid in the attic of his European employer's home, not daring to tune to Eastern Region Radio.

Ironsi was killed in a second coup in July 1966, and a few months later young Ibos like Nwaeke, answering a call from the charismatic and uncompromising eastern region military governor Ojukwu, were wearing Biafra's rising sun symbol on their arms and fighting for independence.

"Ironsi decreed a unification. The north revolted and seized the central government. In the east, I resisted," Ojukwu said in his recent book.

Resistance, for the 9-10 million Ibos including refugees from all over Nigeria, meant an increasingly desperate battle against superior federal firepower and looming starvation.

Support for Gowon from strange bedfellows Britain and the Soviet Union outweighed the mainly moral backing Biafra received from France, China and four African countries.

Ever resourceful, the Biafrans manufactured miniature oil refineries to turn local crude oil into fuel.

They cannibalised trains and scrap vehicles to make armoured cars, and created a series of deadly weapons including mines and flying bombs.

But they were heavily outgunned and undermined by hostility from minority tribes in the east. International peace conferences failed to end the war but 32 months of resistance took its toll and on January 12, 1970, they sued for peace. The formal surrender took place on January 15.

Ibos and non-Ibos alike share the sentiments expressed by Ismaila Isa, managing director of the Democrat newspaper based in the northern city of Kaduna.

"We've seen where civil war leads, and we never want to see it again," he said.

Letters to the editor

Informative article

SIR: I would like to say how informative I found your article on the subject of English women married to Arabs. I am sure that a lot of people have gained interesting and useful knowledge.

In my case, I did not change my passport, religion and views. I, however, familiarised myself with my position when first taking up residence here. So I know where I stand.

Some change their religion and take another name, but this is an individual right.

Since reading your comments I hope that people will not look at my Kuwaiti spouse and think he is any of the unpleasant things written about. This would be so unkind as he is a most honest, fair, generous, pleasant and hardworking person anyone could meet. His whole existence is to make life easier and better for his family.

Another point which I considered rather off the mark was the insinuation regarding our background. We originate from honest and true working class backgrounds, similar to those houses in Kuwait to which we are now related.

All my friends have made good marriages, and none of their children suffer because of the mixed culture. This is their culture and environment.

I like the sun and sand and the slow pace everyone tunes into; and I like the pleasant service in shops and everything majestic.

I do not know any Kuwaiti who is mean to his children/wife. I consider them gentlemen.

Those of us who have produced males are contributing to the future generation of Kuwait. There is so much new blood being introduced into this society, and it is interesting to see the results growing into nationalistic, young Kuwaiti men.

May Kuwait prosper and grow, and may our offspring thrive and reproduce and live happily in this, their, society.

Bette Saif, Almadia.

Accept criticism

SIR: With reference to various letters in the Arab Times, about UMO activities, and being a strong believer of moral and ethical values, I suggest UMO should accept constructive criticism, in order to reinforce the organisation's unity, strength, honour and pride! But it seems that UMO has some members with bad approach and negative ideas.

In that case, it becomes utmost necessary that these anti-progressive elements within the organisation who presumably lost the office bearers election and are appearing in the form of obstacles and critics in progressive path, must be removed; failing which the basic purpose of progressive march towards good objectives and aims would be defeated!

I, along with many other Indians would appreciate the critics, if they come forward to shoulder responsibilities of many unwanted tasks relevant to the poor people, irrespective of cast, creed and religion. Last but not least criticism in most of the cases appear out of lack of selflessness. Endeavours of the organisation must remain pious and firm to dispel any doubts and questions raised by the people.

Mohammed Abdul Latheef, Safat.

ALL Letters to the Editor must contain the writer's name and address. Publication is at the discretion of the Editor and letters are subject to the editing process for space or other reasons.

Quote me

"Entering the race, the state sector, which until recently had been greatly favoured by subsidisation and monopoly rights in many respects, showed visible embarrassment due to its cumbersome and inefficient managerial mechanism and outdated technology." — Vietnam news agency lambasting state-owned enterprises for inefficiency.

"He must have known he was in trouble, dismounted and just let himself down. There were no bruises or scratches, so he wasn't hurt that." — Ranch manager, Johnny Farrar on the death of Texas' oldest working cowboy.

"America is no longer the superpower she was and is entangled in a drug war, AIDS, political scandals and an economic crisis." — Kayhan, an Iranian newspaper.

"As the world looks back to nine decades of war, of strife, of suspicion, let us also look forward to a new century, and a new millennium, of peace, freedom and prosperity." — Bush in a New Year message to Soviets.

"The year 1990 could become a genuine turning point in the efforts to limit and reduce arms. We, on our part, shall do everything for that." — Gorbachev in a New Year message to Americans.

"We will work together to reduce barriers to trade, investment and the free movement of goods and ideas. In these ways, and as your economic reforms take place, the entry of the Soviet Union into the global market can be advanced." — George Bush to Soviets.

"Your own Leo Tolstoy said that if our hearts are empty, no law or political reform can fill them. These values — belong to all men and women, through all time, and in all places." — Bush to Gorbachev.

"I am sure that we have all the political and moral factors to confront any type of problem and that nothing and no one will make our nation backslide on the road of socialism. We are not going to allow the enemy to destroy what we are doing." — Cuban leader Fidel Castro vowing nothing would divert Cuba from socialism.

"While reading the history of the posts that you have taken, we come to the conclusion that the period of corruption started when you took your first past as prime minister." Ahmed Oweidi Abbadi, referring to Jordanian prime minister's earlier terms as premier in the mid-1970s and early 1980s.

"It offers the chance of a free and unified Germany in a free and unified Europe. European Economic Community must not end at the Elbe. But without the deep-sleeping changes in the Soviet Union, in Hungary and in Poland, the peaceful revolution in the GDR (East Germany) would not have been possible." — Kohl on the coming decade for the Germans.

"We hold that the North and the South should remove the barrier between them, ensure free travel and open all their doors. First of all, the concrete wall built in the area south of the military demarcation line must be pulled down. In order to remove the barrier of national division and (ensure) free travel between the North and the South and a full-scale open door, negotiating between them must be held without delay." — Kim Il Sung, leader of N. Korea.

مكذوب الاصل

BUSINESS & FINANCE

Officials to discuss oil market

NICOSIA, Jan 3, (Reuters): Gulf Co-operation Council (GCC) officials will meet in Saudi Arabia on January 8 to discuss oil price forecasts and the impact of world political changes on the oil market, the Omani News Agency said today.

The agency, monitored in Nicosia, said marketing managers at the national oil companies of the six GCC states would discuss short term price forecasts.

It quoted Rashid Bin Khaled Al Barwani, oil and gas marketing director at Oman's Oil Ministry, as saying they would also discuss "development in the oil market in recent months and the impact of current political developments and the environment on the market."

Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Qatar, the United Arab Emirates, Oman and Bahrain advocate stable oil prices at around \$18 a barrel to maintain rising world demand for their oil which accounts for over 40 per cent of the world's total.

King Fahd of Saudi Arabia, the world's largest oil exporter, said on Sunday GCC states should work to increase their share of the market in consultations with other Opec members.

Kuwait's Oil Minister Sheikh Ali Khalifa said today Opec might decide to pump more oil when it meets in Vienna next March.

Except for Oman and Bahrain, GCC states are members of the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries.

Al Barwani said the GCC officials would discuss a report by Kuwait's Petroleum Corp. (KPC), including "an evaluation of crude oil prices and a comparison between crudes in the Gulf and those in Europe, the United States and East Asia."

BA to stop flights to Amman

AMMAN, Jan 3, (Reuters): British Airways (BA) is to end flights to Jordan after several decades and run a joint service with Royal Jordanian (RJ) using RJ aircraft from April 1. BA currently operates three flights a week between London Gatwick and Amman via Cairo. BA aircraft must fly south from Amman because they cannot use Israeli or Syrian airspace.

Geoff Rhodes, BA's manager in Jordan, said an average of only 20 to 25 passengers were using the Amman leg and loads were declining.

There is very little tourism from Jordan now and even the business market is shrinking, he told Reuters.

Local foreign currency restrictions and the weakness of the dinar, which has lost 40 per cent of its dollar value since October 1988, have made it harder for Jordanians to travel.

From April 1 the joint BA-RJ service will run five non-stop flights a week between London Heathrow and Amman, increasing to six from June 1, using RJ Airbus A310-300 aircraft.

Industrial investment

SANAA, Jan 3, (Reuters): Italy will study setting up industrial projects in North Yemen following a visit by Italian Prime Minister Giulio Andreotti, the official news agency Saba has said.

It said Andreotti left for South Yemen on Friday after a two-day visit aimed at increasing Italy's oil imports from North Yemen and expanding other economic co-operation.

Assets selling report denied

KUWAIT, Jan 3 (Kuna): Governor of the Central Bank Sheikh Salem Abdul Aziz Al Sabah today denied a press report alleging that local banks have begun selling assets of indebted persons listed with the government Settlement Programme.

In a statement to Kuna, Sheikh Salem said measures to settle accounts of indebted persons whose debts are below KD250,000 or over do not include selling their assets in public auctions.

He also denied that the recommendations approved by the Council of Ministers to reactivate the economy included a proposal on selling assets of the indebted persons by one way or another.

The report was correct about the existence of public auctions, he said, but those auctions have been set by banks who took legal actions against non-operative customers who are not listed in the Settlement Programme.

The Settlement Programme has been established following the 1981 stock market crash. It was designed to solve the complicated problem of unregulated checks which were very common at the time and lead to an economic disaster in the country and abroad.

Turkish share prices soar

ISTANBUL, Jan 3, (Reuters): Share prices at Istanbul's Stock Exchange rose to their seventh consecutive high today with the market index, based on 100 in January 1986, hitting 2,425.00, 4.9 per cent over Tuesday's close and up 9.3 per cent from Friday.

Prices went up more than six-fold on the emerging market in 1989.

"These are very active days we are living through," said Yural Akisik, general manager of Turk Merchant Bank AS.

3 sister ships to Iranian tanker seized

Tanker on high seas

ROTTERDAM, Netherlands, Jan 3, (Agencies): Three sister ships to the Iranian supertanker that speared a vast oil slick off Morocco have recently been seized in the Netherlands because of maintenance defects, Dutch television reported today.

A total of five Iranian-owned supertankers were seized by authorities over the past 14 months and prevented from leaving Rotterdam until they had undergone repairs, according to the television report.

Among them were three sister ships to the Khark 5, which has spilled an estimated 19 million gallons (72 million litres) of crude into the Atlantic Ocean after an explosion tore through its hull

on Dec 19, television said.

Earlier today, hundreds of clean-up workers on ships and aircraft were struggling to break up a 260-square-kilometre (100-square-mile) oil slick from the Khark 5 which is menacing the Moroccan coast.

The Dutch salvage company Smit Tak is towing the Khark 5 to Cape Verde, where it hopes to transfer its remaining cargo of up to 210,000 tons of crude to another Iranian tanker.

None of the seized ships were identified in the television report, which gave no specifics on the nature of their defects, other than to say the vessels failed to meet international safety and environmental standards.

Rotterdam's Shipping Inspection Office, responsible for the seizures in the world's largest port, was closed and could not be reached for comment.

The Khark 5, built in 1975 and acquired by the National Iranian Tanker Co. in 1986, was damaged in at least three attacks by Iraqi fighter jets during the eight-year Iran-Iraq war, shipping industry expert Richard Golob said yesterday.

The normal lifespan for a supertanker is 15-20 years, after which it needs extensive renovation, according to Geoff Garfield, shipping editor for the London newspaper Lloyd's List.

Meanwhile, hundreds of clean-up workers on ships and aircraft struggled

today to break up a 260-square-kilometre (100-square-mile) oil slick menacing the Moroccan coast.

In Paris, French Environment Minister Brice Lalonde said the crippled Iranian supertanker that unleashed the spill continues to pose a serious threat to marine life.

The Moroccan Navy mobilised a frigate and seven patrol boats to keep an eye on the spill and lay floating barriers to keep the slick at bay along a 350 km (220-mile) front from the rich fishing grounds of Safi north of Casablanca, the official news agency said.

The Maghreb Presse agency reported that helicopters of the Royal Moroccan gendarmerie continued to

spray thousands of gallons of dispersal agents on the oil to break up the slick.

Three C-130 Hercules aircraft of the Moroccan Air Force flew surveillance along the coastline to ensure that none of the oil had washed ashore, MAP said.

The 19-million-gallon (70,000-ton) spill from the Iranian tanker Khark 5 threatens fisheries, oyster farms, a pink flamingo breeding ground and popular tourist beaches, MAP said, with 100,000 jobs hanging in the balance.

Lalonde, returning to Paris after two days in Morocco to assess the North African country's needs in battling the slick, said danger from the spill and the Khark 5 haven't yet passed.

Three seagoing tugs under command of the Dutch salvage firm Smit Tak are towing the half-sunken tanker away from Morocco toward more sheltered waters off the Cape Verde islands.

"I'm concerned not only with what's going to happen to the Moroccan coast — we'll know more this evening — but with what's going to happen to the tanker now that it's on the open seas," Lalonde said.

"The first reaction of other governments is we don't want that thing around us; take the danger far away," Lalonde said. "Secondly, because the sea doesn't belong to any one, the international community is completely unprepared to deal with it."

Sheikh Ali tells Opec to consider quota rise

Suharto warns Opec against trap of high prices

JAKARTA, Jan 3, (Reuters): The current high prices for oil mean Opec should look at the possibility of increasing quotas when ministers meet in March, visiting Kuwait's Oil Minister Sheikh Ali Al Khalifa said.

"I think this is an indication for us that perhaps when we meet in March we should look at the situation. If the market can accommodate more oil then we should be more than happy to increase the quota again," Sheikh Ali said.

He was answering reporters' questions about the rise in prices above the group's \$18 a barrel reference price. "But we have to wait until the March meeting to see the situation," Opec set a production ceiling at 22 million barrels per day for the first half of 1990 but Al Khalifa said actual output could be as high as 23 million.

His Indonesian counterpart, Ginjar Kartasasmita, said Opec's monitoring committee would meet in Vienna in March to discuss oil quotas and prices and all Opec ministers will

be invited.

"The Opec monitoring committee meeting scheduled in March is very important. There will be much at stake there," Ginjar said.

Ginjar said Indonesia and Kuwait both agreed to defend Opec's \$18 reference price.

North Sea Brent was quoted in Singapore at more than \$20.

"The (Kuwait) minister thinks the (\$18) oil price should be defended for three to four years, until Opec could reach production capacity, and then prices will gradually increase," Ginjar said adding he hoped the time frame would be shorter.

"It depends on what we perceive as Opec production capacity, whether it's 25 million, 26 million or 28 million," Ginjar said.

Sheikh Ali said Kuwait's policy was the same as Indonesia's — to maintain stable prices at reasonable levels for a long period to benefit both producer and consumer.

On Sunday, Saudi Arabia's King Fahd backed calls by Gulf states for a

larger share of Opec oil output. He said his country would consult with other Opec members over raising its share of Opec production when the market warrants.

Indonesia's President Suharto warned Opec against being trapped by high prices which could in fact be a strategy by consumer countries to push up production and then force prices down.

"President Suharto told Sheikh Ali that we should not be trapped by the temptation of higher oil prices," Indonesian Energy Minister Ginjar Kartasasmita told reporters.

Suharto told the Kuwaiti minister on the final day of his four-day visit here that Indonesia had had bad experiences with other commodities of which it was encouraged to increase production only to see prices fall sharply.

Suharto said such experiences were likely to have been part of a strategy by consumer countries.

"Opec must be very careful about this kind of thing, therefore it is very

important for Opec to maintain reasonable prices both for oil consumers and producers," Suharto said.

Prices are currently being quoted at least \$2 above the Opec reference price of \$18.

"We don't want prices to increase too fast. We don't want to increase prices as long as some Opec members' output capacity has not been fulfilled, because if not, there could be cheating," Ginjar said.

Meanwhile, Oman said today its total revenues rose by 12.7 per cent in the first nine months of 1989.

Official figures issued by the Omani News Agency, monitored in Nicosia, said the revenues, 85 per cent from oil and gas, went up 1.1 billion rials (\$2.86 billion) from January to September in 1989 compared to the same period in 1988.

It said oil revenues jumped 13 per cent to 902 million rials (\$2.34 billion) compared with 797.8 million rials (\$2.07 billion).

Higher taxes rejected

ALGIERS, Jan 3, (Reuters): Algeria's parliament has rejected a government request for tax increases on some goods, including fuel and approved a budget with a 3.5 billion dinar (\$424 million) deficit, Economy Minister Ghazi Hidouci said.

The official Algerian News Agency APS quoted Hidouci as telling a news conference last night the amendments imposed by parliament during a one-week budget debate will cause the government financial problems.

"But it (the government) reserves the right to go back to parliament later with a supplementary finance bill," he said.

The new budget deficit figure was 500 million dinars (\$60 million) higher than the one reported by APS at the start of the debate, but the agency did not specify whether the parliament had increased provisions.

It compares with a 5.1 billion dinars (\$635 million) deficit budgeted for 1989.

Hidouci said the proposed new taxes building materials, paint, wood, iron and some imports among others were directed more at the rich than the poor.

Stronger dollar knocks gold down Shares soar to record highs

LONDON, Jan 3, (Reuters): Shares soared to all-time closing highs in London and Frankfurt today on a wave of optimism spurred by an earlier record-breaking session on Wall Street.

London, the world's third biggest stock market after Tokyo and New York, smashed the record set 2-1/2 years ago before the Black Monday world stock markets crash in October 1987.

"We could be heading for a bit of a consolidation but it does look very healthy at the moment," said one dealer.

The Financial Times-Stock Exchange index of 100 leading shares closed 29.6 points higher at 2,463.7, well above the previous record close of 2,443.3 set on July 16, 1987.

"I see the top side of the trading range on the Ftse index at 2,500 in the first quarter this year," said Randal Goldsmith, equity strategist at brokers James Capel.

Dealers said the rise had been helped by a 56.95-point jump on Wall Street's Dow Jones Industrial Average last night to 2,810.15, the first time it has finished above 2,800.

The previous Dow record close of 2,791.41 was set on Oct 9 last year.

New York traders said the Dow's rise was due to enthusiastic start-of-the-year buying and a stronger US dollar.

Wall Street continued to move higher today and stood 5.34 points up at 2,185.49 by midday in New York.

Dealers said the London market had also drawn encouragement from a sharp rise in Frankfurt.

West German shares have climbed steadily since East German borders were opened on Nov 9, which economists said would further strengthen Europe's biggest economy.

Strong foreign demand for West German stocks boosted Frankfurt's Dax index of 30 blue chips up 55.28 points, one of its largest single-day gains, to end three per cent higher at 1,869.66, continuing a run of record closes.

The stronger dollar knocked gold down to \$395.50 an ounce at the close in London, the first time it has ended below \$400 for more than six weeks.

North Sea prices jump

Prices could go even further

LONDON, Jan 3, (Reuters): The price of North Sea oil surged to a four-year high today following a rally in US petrol prices yesterday, dealers said.

They said North Sea Brent Blend, the world's most widely traded crude, was also boosted because readily available supplies were limited.

Cargoes of Brent for loading in February were quoted around \$21.50 a barrel at 1600 GMT, up more than one dollar from the same time yesterday and the highest since January 1986.

"It is not a big surprise bearing in mind what happened in the States last night," said one European trader, referring to a rise of more than one dollar in US crude prices yesterday.

Until this week, it was cold weather, particularly in the United States, that had boosted US heating oil and European gas oil prices and led the crude oil market higher.

Better weather in the United States has prompted traders to switch attention to petrol and try to avoid a repeat of the supply shortages which drove heating oil prices up sharply.

"Gasoline is leading crude oil," said one trader.

"We're still bullish. Prices could go even further," said another trader.

Others were less sure the rally could be sustained,

saying it was unusually early in the season for petrol to be leading the market.

"I think a lot of players will try to take profits in this market," said one European trader. "I expect over the next two or three days not to see a dramatic fall. But it is my personal opinion that by Wednesday of next week we'll see the first considerable price fall."

But, he warned: "We keep saying that prices have peaked and we're always wrong."

Meanwhile, Omani Oil Minister Said Bin Ahmed Al Shanfari predicted in remarks published today that oil prices would drop by at least one dollar a barrel in February and March because of lower seasonal demand.

"It is expected that the months of February and March will witness a decline in oil prices by at least one dollar a barrel to around \$18 a barrel which is the prevailing price in the market," Omani newspaper Al Watan quoted him as saying.

Excerpts of the interview were carried by the official Omani news agency, received in Cyprus.

Al Shanfari said Oman, a non-Opec producer, wanted stable oil prices "for the benefit of producers and consumers alike."

WORLD STOCK ROUNDUP

SYDNEY, Jan 3, (Reuters): Shares closed sharply higher on local and overseas buying spurred by a new year surge on Wall Street. The All Ordinaries index closed at 1,686.2, up 31.5 points.

TOKYO: Stock market closed. Reopens tomorrow.

HONG KONG: Stocks rose in reaction to the Wall Street sharp rally overnight but the market was generally quiet. The Hang Seng index closed up 20.65 points at 2,838.72.

SINGAPORE: Strong foreign and institutional buying pushed shares to record highs. The Straits Times industrial index jumped 22.53 points to 1,521.99.

BOMBAY: Share prices fell on rumours the government is planning to curb use of corporate funds for speculation in the market, brokers said.

FRANKFURT: West German blue chips powered ahead to record high. The Dax index ended 3.0 per cent higher at 1,869.66.

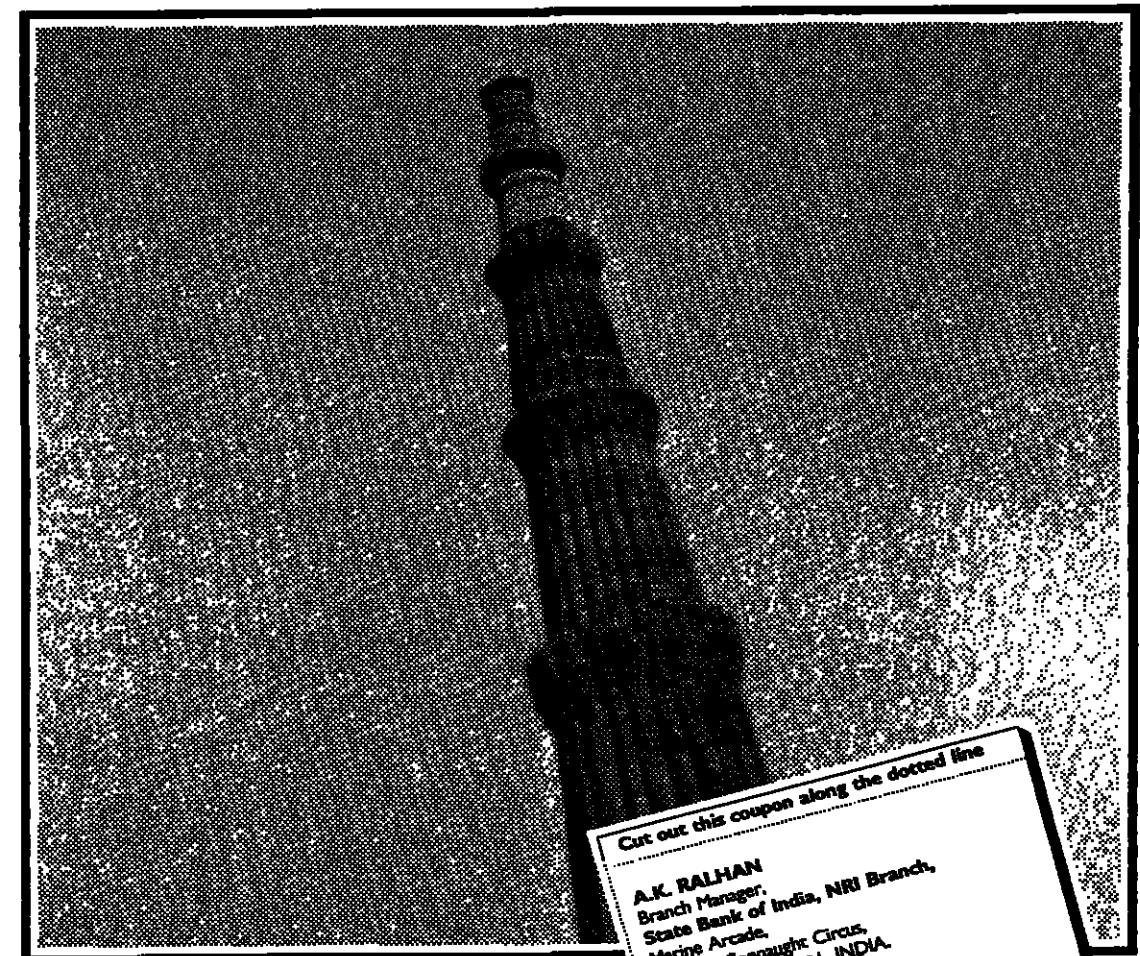
ZURICH: Swiss shares closed the first session of 1990 higher in lively trading. The All-Share index rose 24.2 to close at 1,162.1.

PARIS: Share prices closed weaker but off earlier lows after the Bank of France surprised the money market by leaving its intervention rate at 10 per cent. The CAC-40 index closed 8.96 points down at 1,979.89.

LOWOPE: Share prices ended at a new closing high on the FTSE 100 share index, but below the record intra-day peak. The FTSE closed 29.6 points up at 2,463.7.

NEW YORK: Wall Street stocks were firm but the advance was narrow and blue chips moved uncertainly. The Dow was up five points at 2,815.

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Businesses object to new taxes

LONDON, Jan 3, (AP): New provisional commercial tax bills received by businesses today prompted a storm of protest, with Harrods calling its eightfold tax increase over the next five years "monstrous."

The government is revising commercial tax rates for all businesses in England and Wales for the first time in 17 years.

The new commercial taxes will be phased in over five years and companies will face an increase no greater than 20 per cent this year.

The revision comes as the government introduces a new system of taxing households based on the number of individuals living in each one rather than on the value of the property.

Every business, from the corner shops to the industrial giants, was given a new "rating valuation" in preparation for the introduction of the uniform business rate of 34.8 per cent in April.

John Banham, director general of the business group the Confederation of British Industry, said the increased burden could push up inflation just as the government is trying to fight resurgent inflation with high interest rates.

Banham predicted a "hurricane" of protests from the business community.

Of the 1.6 million commercial properties valued for the first time since 1973, nearly one million face higher bills.

The biggest rises will come in London and the southeast of England, with major stores being hardest hit. Harrods' annual tax will increase from £1 million (\$1.62 million) to £8.4 million (\$13.3 million) in five years.

David Simons, finance director of the store's owner, House of Fraser Plc, said it would appeal against the "monstrous" increase.

He added: "To retailers, increases of this magnitude are insupportable. We are confident that sense will prevail, or there will be a lot of empty shops in every high street in Britain."

A high street is a main shopping street.

Commercial ratepayers have six months from the introduction of the new system to lodge an appeal against their assessment.

Bombay shares

Bombay Stock Exchange prices (Rs) Jan 3	Pr. Close	Open	Close
ACC	344	347.50	335
Alkerm	—	—	—
Alm Nis	—	—	—
Alm Fab	—	—	—
Ashtok Ley	97	97	97
Asia Paint	235	235	233.75
Atlas Corp	45	45	46
Auto Corp	62.50	—	—
Nat Index	422.43	—	416.91
Bajaj Ind	392.50	387.50	385
Bar Rayon	755	795	735
Blow Plast	—	—	—
Born Dye	219	210	209
BK Bond	104.50	104	105
Burel Pol	97.50	—	—
Canshare	—	—	—
Can Enka	3350	3375	3325
Can Ind	2780	2770	2710
Colgate	188.75	188.75	190
Cromi Gr	1000	950	1000
DCM	14	14	15
Deep Fert	34	34	34
Dunlop	70	74	75
El Hotels	65	62	65
Escorts	86	86	85.50
ESB Index	780.01	—	763.22
Eskayef	147.50	147.50	150
Essar Spg	35.25	35.75	35.50
Food Spl	123.75	121.25	120
Forbes	53.75	51.25	55
Gar Poly	38	38.50	37
Gindia	115	115.50	113
GNFC	44	43.25	41.50
Grasim	67	126	125.50
GE Shug	51.50	51	52.75
GSFC	180	178.75	177.50
Guj Ald	82	81.50	82.50
Guy Heavy	21	18.50	17.50
Hind Ciba	19	18	19
Hind Lever	1590	1615	1530
Hind Cocoa	114	115	114
Hind Motor	160	165	162.50
Hindalco	27	26	24
Hoechst	255	255	256.25
Hoescht	2000	2030	2000
Ingersoll	63	62.50	61.50
Ind Org	51	51	49
Ind Rayon	101.50	102	97.50
Indrol	306.25	306.25	200
JK Syn	66	64.50	61.50
Kin Engg	150	148	152.50
Kir Cumm	72	71	72
KSB Pumps	81	81	79
L & T	107	107	108
Lipton	222.50	225	220
Prem Auto	73	72.50	70
Ranbaxy	102.50	97.50	102.50
Ray Wool	75	74	75
Reckitt	230	235	237.50
Reliance	85	84	81
Sara Gm	81	81	83
Shaw Wall	—	—	—
Shree Cem	—	—	—
Shri Fib	68	67	68.50
Siemens	98	97	97
SKF	1420	1450	1400
Spic	61	61	59
St Mila	610	610	640
Tata Tel	—	—	—
Tata Chem	129	130	130
Tata Pow	467.50	470	475
Teleo	1245	1257.5	1237.5
Thiapp Agro	117	116.50	112.50
Vam Org	150	150	150
Vareli	21.25	23.75	23.75
Vollu	700	690	720
Winco	26.50	27.50	27
Zenith	60	59	60
Zuari Agro	64	62	64

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Business group backs delay on clean air bill

WASHINGTON, Jan 3, (AP): A business coalition including major oil, gas, auto and chemical companies favours "stalling early action" on a senate clean air bill, according to a memorandum that describes a private strategy session.

The memo urges industry representatives to contact senators and tell them "senators are upset at (Democratic leader George) Mitchell for speed of action... and not deliberating on the issues."

Mitchell and Democratic Sen. Max Baucus are the key strategists on the bill, which has generally won environmentalists' support for its language to clean the skies of acid rain, toxic chemicals and urban smog. However, industry views the measure as too costly

and not feasible.

The unsigned memo said dozens of senators were asking congressional research agencies for an "economic impact analysis" of the legislation and added, "this is a key part of stalling early action" on the bill.

New clean air legislation is the top environmental goal in this Congress for Mitchell, House leaders and President George Bush. Mitchell has scheduled the Senate clean air measure as the first bill to be considered when senators return from recess Jan 23, although a long debate is expected.

The House version, which is closer to Bush's proposal than the Senate plan, still must pass through the energy and commerce committee before reaching the floor.

The industry memo, obtained by the Associated Press, provides a detailed account of a Dec 4 meeting attended by more than 100 members of the clean air working group — a coalition including 1,950 companies and trade associations interested in clean air legislation.

It urged members of the industry group "to contact Senate offices over the next several weeks many times."

William Fay, administrator of the clean air working group, said in an interview, "except for the word 'stall,' it's probably fairly accurate notes. I want a clean air bill this year. If it gets done this year what's the purpose of a stall?"

"I didn't use that language," Fay said, but he couldn't recall whether another participant did so.

Fay denied that the participants were told to attack Mitchell. But he acknowledged they were asked to make the point that "this is basically a railroaded bill," because it was rushed through the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee with little debate in November.

A Mitchell aide would not comment on the specifics of the memo. The aide, speaking on condition of anonymity, said the Maine Democrat has "made it known for months it will be the first item of business. There will be significant debate and there should be significant debate. Senator Mitchell welcomes that debate."

Casey Scott Padgett, legislative counsel to an environmental group called environmental action, said,

"after blocking improvements to the clean air act for the past decade, it's no surprise polluters have launched a new campaign of delay."

Padgett said the industry group's tactics "will backfire like a polluting, old gas-guzzler."

The memo urged the business representatives to "make reservations now" for their chief operating officers to appear in Washington this month to lobby against the bill.

Fay said the Senate bill's requirements for reducing smog are "punitive, costly and inflexible." He

contended "a number of industries with revenues exceeding \$100 billion a year may not survive" the standards for reducing health risks from toxic chemical emissions.

He said the requirement to cut acid rain emissions "put an incredible economic burden on the industrial Midwest and southeast." Auto exhaust standards "cannot be achieved by any known technology," he said, and predicted that plants making family-sized cars would have to shut down.

Fay said, "I want senators to understand when we leave their office how extreme this bill is." "I were Mitchell and didn't want senators to know what the bill said. I couldn't plan a better strategy."

Oil revenues expected to rise further

Saudis set to enter decade of economic expansion

KUWAIT, Jan 3, (Reuters): Saudi Arabia seems set to enter a decade of steady economic expansion after making painful budget cuts throughout most of the 1980s, bankers and diplomats said today.

Unveiling its 1990 budget, the government on Sunday projected its first spending increase since the oil boom peaked in 1981, with planned expenditures rising by 1.4 per cent in the coming year to 143 billion riyals (\$38.1 billion).

"We think they will begin to climb from here on out. They have turned a corner," said a Western diplomat in Riyadh.

The kingdom, the world's largest oil exporter, saw a dramatic fall in oil revenues from more than \$100 billion in 1981 to a low of \$13.6 billion in 1986, forcing it

to make budget cuts up as high as 15 per cent a year for most of the decade.

But diplomats said the market for Saudi crude oil picked up substantially in 1989 and looked likely to keep on rising.

Total 1989 revenues rose to around 120 billion to 125 billion riyals (\$32 billion to 33.3 billion) from the originally projected 116 billion, they said, and this was nearly all due to an increase in oil income.

"Markets were much, much stronger than anyone anticipated a year ago. The budget worked out better than anyone thought," said the diplomat.

Oil revenues were expected to rise still further in 1990 to 86 billion riyals (\$23 billion) from around 81 billion in 1989.

This is provided Saudi Arabia produces within its current Opec quota of just over five million barrels per day and based on a barrel of Arabian light, the benchmark Saudi crude, selling at \$16.25.

Diplomats said Saudi budget projections for both revenues and expenditure were probably low.

"The government probably considers current spending at the rock bottom minimum to maintain a certain level of economic activity and political stability," said a banker.

According to sectoral figures released by the government, allocations for administration declined.

"They will have to make sharp cuts on the administrative side,

which is hard to do," said a diplomat.

The government said it would make up the difference between revenues and expenditure by continuing its sensitive programme of issuing riyal-denominated bonds in the local market.

But bankers say their appetite for the medium-term instruments has largely been satisfied and many are being taken by government pension funds.

Diplomats estimated that Saudi Arabia was currently drawing four to \$6 billion a year from its foreign reserves.

The reserves are estimated at around \$63 billion, but only 20 billion to 25 billion are liquid, bankers said. If oil revenues were to remain stagnant the reserves could last as little as four years.

Nigeria seeks support for more austerity

LAGOS, Jan 3, (Reuters): Nigeria's military president tried today to drum up popular support for another austerity budget in 1990, saying black Africa's biggest debtor nation would stick to its radical three-year-old economic reform plan.

The government was committed to "economic reconstruction, social justice and self-reliance," General Ibrahim Babangida said in a nation-wide broadcast.

He predicted more intense and complex economic difficulties for Africa and the Third World in the early 1990s, but said the government would do its best to ease the

suffering of the vulnerable among Nigeria's 100 million people.

"Low income groups and the unemployed are going to be confronted with extreme hardships, including hunger, lingering poverty," he said. Medical care and education would be inadequate.

The government, backed by the World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF) which endorse its structural adjustment programme, kept anti-austerity riots last May firmly in mind when drafting the new budget.

Indian rupee	17.380
Sri Lanka rupee	7.420
Pakistan rupee	13.820
Bangladesh taka	9.020
US dollar	29.380
Pound sterling	47.425
UAE dirham	0.7995
Deutsche mark	17.110
Japanese yen	202.025

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Gujarat-Godrej Innovative Chemicals Ltd. has been promoted by the Rs. 800 crore Godrej Group and Gujarat Industrial Investment Corporation Ltd. (GIIC) to manufacture 35,000 tpa of Alpha olefin, a vital import substitute, for the first time in India.

The Rs. 109 crore project will have its plant located just 23 kms away from Ankleshwar in the Bharuch District of Gujarat and will manufacture Alpha olefin using a process developed in-house by Dr. B.P. Godrej and his team, using vegetable oils. This process is unique and has been patented by Godrej in many countries around the world.

Alpha olefin, when sulphated, enjoys a tremendous demand from different industries - the Rs. 3000 crore soap, detergent and toiletries industries as well as polymers, leather, textiles, oil-drilling, mining, etc. For Godrej the project is a backward integration as the Group is a large consumer of Alpha olefin.

The imported plant and machinery is being supplied by Lurgi GmbH, West Germany, one of the world's largest process engineering companies with a turnover of over Rs. 1500 crore per annum. Lurgi who has been associated with Godrej for many years will also provide performance guarantees. The Company is well established in India and has set up more than 75 plants for leading organisations in the country including Godrej.

And now, to part finance the project, Gujarat-Godrej Innovative Chemicals Ltd. is making a Public Issue of 21,00,000 - 12.5% Secured Redeemable Party Convertible Debentures of Rs. 150 each for cash at par of which 4,00,000 Convertible Debentures are reserved for preferential allotment to Non-Resident Indians/persons of Indian origin residing abroad on repatriation basis.

Each Convertible Debenture will be issued in 3 parts and converted as follows. Part A of Rs. 50 into 5 shares of Rs. 10 each at par on allotment and Part B of Rs. 50 into 5 shares of Rs. 10 each at par on March 31, 1991. Part C of Rs. 50 will be redeemed in two equal instalments at the expiry of the 8th and 9th year from the date of allotment.

Yes, this is it. Your chance to participate in the success of this potential new venture and in the first public issue from the House of Godrej!

HIGHLIGHTS

- Strong promoters - The Godrej Group and GIIC
- Import substitution project to manufacture Alpha olefin
- Tremendous demand for Alpha olefin from the rapidly-growing soap and detergent industry
- Backward integration project for the Godrej Group as GIIC's products will enjoy an excellent captive demand.
- Technical collaboration with Lurgi GmbH, West Germany, one of the world's largest process engineering companies with a turnover exceeding Rs. 1500 crore per annum
- Two-third of the face value of each convertible debenture will be converted into Equity Shares AT PAR.
- Project to enjoy Sales-Tax benefits under the "Pioneer Unit Scheme" of Government of Gujarat
- BOCC and Wealth-Tax benefits
- Listing on the Ahmedabad, Bombay, Delhi and Calcutta Stock Exchanges

Issue opens on:
For NRI's - 9th January, 1990
For Indian Public
10th January, 1990

GUJARAT-GODREJ Innovative Chemicals Ltd.
Registered Office: 247/1, GIIC Industrial Estate Sachin, Dist. Surat 394 203/Gujarat

The name is the promise

Egypt to buy wheat for cash

CAIRO, Jan 3. (Reuters): Egypt has offered to use scarce hard currency to replenish its depleted stocks of wheat after France refused to provide supplies on credit in a dispute over unpaid debts, foreign experts said today.

France, a major supplier, has held up wheat and flour sales because of the debt row, threatening Egypt with a major supply crisis by June this year, the experts say.

To head off the shortfall, Egypt will tender for 200,000 tonnes on Jan 20, trade sources in Paris said.

Egypt last bought wheat for cash in June with a world tender for 200,000 tonnes, marking the first time it had made a complete cash purchase since the early 1970s.

But foreign experts say the cash offer will still not be enough to prevent stocks falling to dangerously low levels.

Egypt, the world's third largest wheat importer after the Soviet Union and China, imports about seven million tonnes of wheat each year to keep up supplies of subsidised bread.

Despite cash problems, the government cannot risk cutting back wheat imports, fearing rioting by a population already sorely-hit by economic depression.

Trade sources estimate that Egypt needs to import about 460,000 tonnes of wheat every month and 125,000 tonnes of wheat flour. Without French wheat, stocks could fall to less than 100,000 tonnes by June.

Wheat flour stocks earlier peaked at 1.5 million tonnes in May 1989, although France has since agreed to send 40,000 tonnes of wheat flour in food aid.

Egypt buys about 40 per cent of its wheat from the United States with the rest divided roughly equally between the European Economic Community and Australia. Most is bought on credit.

It has so far agreed to buy 1.5 million tonnes of wheat from Australia — with part of the payment in cash — and has some supplies due in from the United States.

Australia is also supplying 50,000 tonnes of wheat under its food aid programme.

But France, the main EEC supplier, said last month it would not provide export credit guarantees to cover the shipment of 150,000 tonnes of wheat flour because of credit disputes.

Government officials in Paris said today France and Egypt planned to hold talks in Cairo this month to try to resolve the dispute.

Foreign experts said it was unclear which debts were involved but could include arrears on previous wheat sales. It does not include debt which would be subject to rescheduling at any agreement at the Paris Club of creditor nations.

Rolls-Royce's unique role

ROLLS-ROYCE engines capable of powering the new breed of wide-bodied airliners or multi-role combat aircraft will lead the company's participation at February's Asian Aerospace show in Singapore.

More than 26,000 Rolls-Royce gas turbines are in service around the world, with many of the company's 1,250 customers in the Asia-Pacific region.

Rolls-Royce deputy chairman Sir Ralph Robins said: "The Asia-Pacific region has been very important to us and we plan to continue to play a significant role through our wide range of civil and military engines, and through industrial and technology agreements."

Currency rates

KUWAIT, Jan 3. (Kuna): Following are the international currency rates as quoted by local banks and announced by the Central Bank of Kuwait yesterday.

	Buying	Selling
US dollar	0.2273	0.2343
Sterling	0.47170	0.47325
DM	0.17025	0.17085
Sfr	0.18525	0.18590
Ffr	0.04980	0.05000
ILira	0.000270	0.000285
Arg peso	0.002205	0.002320
Bah din	0.77645	0.77870
UAE Dir	0.07965	0.08005
S. riyal	0.07805	0.07830
Q. riyal	0.08035	0.08065
O. riyal	0.76000	0.76240

Interest Rates

KUWAIT, Jan 3. (Kuna): Following are the average KD interest rates of local interbank transactions as reported by participants to Central Bank of Kuwait yesterday.

Period	Bid	Offered
1 month	8-1/4	8-1/2
3 months	8-1/4	8-1/2
6 months	8-1/4	8-1/2
1 year	8-1/4	8-1/2

EEC trade proposals fall short of Arab hopes

BAHRAIN, Jan 3. (Reuters): European Economic Community proposals for a free trade pact with Gulf Arab states fall far short of the developing bloc's expectations and will make negotiations long and difficult, regional officials say.

Members of the six-state Gulf Co-operation Council (GCC) say they are disappointed with trade proposals approved by the EEC last month because they do not lift painful protective barriers against the group's key industries.

One obstacle to a quick agreement with the EEC is the failure of the Gulf states so far to

agree common tariffs within the region, necessary in any bargaining with the European grouping.

But the bigger problem is that the GCC sees as EEC insistence on blocking its crucial petrochemical and other products.

"The proposed draft does not fulfill our desire for a more open market between the two regions," Abdullah Al Quwatir, GCC secretary general for economic affairs, said.

"We are attempting to diversify our economies into new avenues for petrochemicals, aluminium and refined products... there are measures which will hinder the accessibility of these

to the European market," he told Reuters by telephone from his Riyadh office.

Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates form the GCC, an economic and political alliance.

The group has been urging the 12-member EEC, its main trading partner, to lift tariffs on GCC exports to help narrow a trade deficit which reached \$4.4 billion in 1988.

EEC products account for over 40 per cent of the GCC market. Most enter with little or no duty while cheaply-produced Gulf petrochemicals face tariffs

of up to 14 per cent.

EEC Industrial Affairs Commissioner Martin Bangemann visited Saudi Arabia and Bahrain last week in a bid to reassure Gulf officials that the scheduled 1992 breakdown of remaining barriers within the EEC was not meant to keep out their products.

Quwatir described the talks as encouraging but said a period of "long and complicated negotiations" lay ahead.

Under the free trade proposals — which follow a preliminary economic agreement signed in 1988 — GCC states would scrap duties on all European products

over eight years.

In return, the community would immediately eliminate duties on all GCC products except for three lists of "sensitive" items which include most that matter. Tariffs on these would be phased out over eight to 12 years.

The proposals would also allow GCC states to put 20 per cent duties on some products to protect infant industries up to a value of 10 per cent on total trade.

EEC industrialists fear a flood of cut-price imports from the area.

One GCC official said the

proposals were unfair because the lists of sensitive products — which include about 46 types of petrochemicals — were too long.

Another said it would take months before direct talks could begin because the GCC had yet to agree on key policy issues.

"The GCC has to agree to freeze customs tariffs during the negotiating period and to decide on reference tariffs from which to make their concessions," he said.

The GCC decided at an annual summit last December to further delay a proposed customs pact for three years.

However, officials from both sides say meetings scheduled bet-

ween GCC and EEC petrochemical chiefs in Brussels in January and between industrialists from both sides in Spain in February would help speed up a trade agreement.

"It's a question of industry, not politics," James Kubosch, an aide to Bangemann, said in Bahrain on Monday.

"Everyone is afraid now but they will get to know each other and identify and discuss problem points," he said.

Foreign ministers from the GCC and the EEC would also discuss the issue at a meeting on March 17 in Muscat, Kubosch said.

Greater private-led growth vital: Oman

Muscat stays cautious on economy

DUBAI, Jan 3. (Reuters): Oman looks set to achieve a real 1990 budget deficit lower than projected but remains cautious due to notoriously volatile oil prices, and hopes to set a firmer basis for greater private-led growth in the future.

This year's budget, announced on Monday, set a 1990 deficit of 314 million rials (\$815 million) with spending eight per cent higher at 1.75 billion (4.5 billion) and revenue at 1.43 billion (3.7 billion).

The government, repeating its policy of 1989, projected 1990 revenues on 1989 oil prices despite a general belief amongst analysts that world oil prices will be firm this year.

Independent economists believe Oman budgeted 1989 revenues on an oil price of \$12.50 a barrel while the final average was around \$15 to 16 for last year.

Oil revenues account for about 90 per cent of total state income. Oman yesterday raised its monthly December crude price to

\$17.70 per barrel.

Deputy Prime Minister for Financial and Economic Affairs Qais Bin Abdulmonim Al Zawawi said that for this same reason the real 1989 deficit would come out lower than the projected 407.6 million rials (\$1.1 billion), but did not say by how much.

Omani ministers and officials in a series of reports for the coming year outlined their plans for a gradual reduction in the state's role in the economy.

The policy is similar to that in other Gulf Arab oil producing countries which have begun to see the dangers of continually leading growth through spending state incomes which rely almost exclusively on moves in world oil prices.

Cutting the state role may not be easy. State spending as a percentage of gross domestic product (GDP), which is the value of all goods and services produced in the economy, was 55 per cent in 1988 and as high as 67 per cent in 1986, the year of Oman's biggest recorded deficit

following the oil price collapse.

Commerce and Industry Minister Salem Bin Abdullah Al Ghazali said government policy should encourage the private sector to participate more effectively in economic development. Agriculture and Fisheries Minister Mohammed Bin Abdullah Bin Zaher Al Hinsi said his sector would try to produce more food to cut down imports, and create jobs.

The sector is only four to five per cent of total gross domestic product but growing quickly, especially in fisheries.

Senior Central Bank official Mohammed Abdul Aziz Kalmoor said monetary stability remained a cornerstone policy.

Oman's other main concern is holding off imported inflation due to its large imports of consumer and capital items.

"Imported inflation... is more difficult to contain," said Kalmoor in his report.

Economists say anti-inflationary measures in the European Economic Community, which is

Oman's biggest trade partner, will help contain imported inflation.

But the recent rise in most EEC currencies against the dollar could offset this by raising EEC import prices in Oman, where the rial is effectively linked to the dollar.

Omani officials see import diversification as the answer to this particular dilemma.

Independent economists see a long-term improvement only through a greater private sector role in developing the manufacturing and processing sector to substitute imports.

Oman, however, is confident of a better future for its oil output in the next five years. Oil Minister Said Bin Ahmed Al Shanfari said Oman could reach 670,000 barrels per day oil output over the next five years from 600,000 now.

Oman's main oil problem is lack of major reserves. Shanfari said proven reserves now are 4.2 billion barrels and he was optimistic more would be found.

Industrialisation progressing at a rapid pace

Loan conditions soft, says GIB

This is the third part of the article "GCC urged to map industrial strategy." First part appeared on Tuesday, Jan 2.

While their main focus of operations is manufacturing, other priority sectors are included, namely agriculture in the case of the Oman Development Bank (ODB) and services that are associated with industrial sectors. Loan conditions are soft with lending rates well below commercial rates.

Loans extended by Sidf are charged at 2 per cent while IBK charges 5 per cent on new projects and 6.2 per cent on expansion of existing ones. The Oman Development Bank charges 6 per cent if the project is located in the capital area or in Rasayl industrial estate and 4 per cent for those located elsewhere. Maturity ranges from 5-7 years with a two year grace period (Kuwait), with maturity reaching up to 10 years in Oman and 15 years in Saudi Arabia.

A secondary yet critical role played by development banks is its non-financial support. The identification of development opportunities, translation into viable projects, provision of technical and other support services are as crucial as the actual mobilisation of resources. Gulf development banks and funds have developed extensive capabilities of appraisal, evaluating feasibility studies

submitted by investors, monitoring projects during implementation and providing supportive financial, managerial, marketing and technical assistance to the projects.

Between 1974 and 1988, the Saudi Industrial Development Fund extended more than \$4 billion worth of concessional loans to a total of 997 projects in the manufacturing sector. The construction material sector accounted for 41 per cent of total loans extended, followed by metal and engineering products (21 per cent), chemical (20 per cent), consumer products (18 per cent) and other manufacturing (1 per cent).

The Industrial Bank of Kuwait extended concessional loans to the country's manufacturing sector worth over \$1 billion for around 382 projects over the period 1974-1988, while the total loans commitment of Oman Development Bank was \$119 million to 237 projects since its inception in 1979.

Emirates Industrial Bank, a relative newcomer with operations beginning in 1983 had by the end of 1988 allocated \$68.4 million to 72 projects in the industrial sector.

At the regional level, the Gulf Investment Corporation (GIC), established in 1984 by the six Gulf states with a capital of \$2.1 billion (\$540 paid up) provides Gulf private investors with a

broad range of financial services as well as participation in loan funding and equity of various companies, industrial and other. Commercial viability has been the key test for GIC's participation in investment projects.

The cumulative number of projects identified since the formation of GIC is over 120. Currently 35 of these projects are under evaluation and a further 11 had already been approved. The total financial requirements of the approved projects exceed \$900 million.

To encourage greater flow of commercial bank lending to the industrial sectors, a joint financing mechanism needs to be developed that would pool the resources of the region's industrial development funds with those of the commercial banks. While development institutions could extend financing to industrial projects at the longer end of the maturity profile, commercial banks would step in at the shorter end providing working capital, bonding requirements and import finance facilities.

Alternatively, commercial and development loans may be linked through a cross-default clause, whereby a payment default on the commercial loan will constitute a default on the concessional loan, and will trigger suspension of disbursement to the borrower from the development institution.

(Concluded)



Saeed Al Naqeeb of Al Naqeeb and Khattar, receiving the IASA shield of appreciation from the IASA chairman at the official opening of the 37th IASA general assembly meeting recently.

Nazih Khattar reviews IASA operations

IMFA spreads its wings

A GENERAL meeting of the members of the International Maritime Forwarding Association (IMFA) took place recently at Kuwait Regency Palace Hotel. The Association was established in May 1989 in Beijing as an offshoot of the International Air Shipping Association (IASA) which held its 37th General Assembly meeting at the Regency Palace Hotel. The bi-annual meeting was hosted in Kuwait by the international freight forwarding company, Al Naqeeb and Khattar.

IASA is strictly an air freight association. We felt it was necessary to form the equivalent but related to the shipping business," commented Dominique Poissot, chairman of IMFA. He explained that the increased competition from the multinational freight forwarding giants has made it necessary for medium sized, independent firms to work in close co-operation and pool their resources. This network arrangement has several advantages, he said.

"We liaise directly with members on the shipping route or destination to ensure a more efficient, flexible and personalised 'door-to-door' service. IMFA is also in the process of gaining recognition from major international shipping lines."

Presently there are thirteen exclusive IMFA members representing their respective countries, with four more currently under review, to join the group. The former includes Kuwait, France, West Germany, Taiwan, Korea, China, Venezuela, Sri Lanka, Hong Kong, Singapore, Philippines and Thailand.

The meeting in Kuwait covered several topics related to international shipping, including communications and media. "I feel it is important to promote fellow members whenever possible in advertisements and this can be done by highlighting a particular route. IMFA are not international or multinational — we are 'combination' — and work closely as a team," Poissot said.

IMFA's Kuwait delegate, Al Naqeeb and Khattar was represented by R.R. Rajendra, International Freight Manager, and Saad Darwish, Operations Manager.

Rajendra told the Arab Times that within one year, the concept and philosophy of IMFA will be known world-wide, and its significance in servicing the freight industry will be appreciated by all export/import houses, the construction industry and

wherever IMFA members are present.

IMFA's continuous efforts will be a step forward in improving the existing level of service in shipping and forwarding industry," Rajendra said.

Al Naqeeb and Khattar, as a pioneer in freight forwarding and a Kuwait based IMFA member, has already significantly contributed towards IMFA achieving their goals.

On Tuesday, Nov 21, 1989 the International Air Shipping Association (IASA) held their 37th bi-annual General Assembly meeting at the Regency Palace Hotel, Kuwait. More than seventy delegates representing international air freight companies attended the meeting which was hosted by the Kuwait-based air freight company and member, Al Naqeeb and Khattar.

According to Nazih Khattar, Director of Al Naqeeb and Khattar, the 37th General Assembly meeting discussed a number of highly topical issues, such as the EEC developments after 1992, an overall move towards 'globalisation' and management structure.

"One of the main achievements of the Assembly was the establishment of a new committee specifically to study the formation of a computerised network to provide a state-of-the-art communications system on a world-wide basis for IASA members," Khattar said.

Additionally, he explains, a new category of membership was agreed upon, that of affiliate members who, due to restrictions beyond their control (such as political, economic etc.), were formerly unable to become full IASA members. Two air freight companies, Servicios Aduaneros de Argentina and Desped of Bulgaria have consequently been granted affiliate membership. The latter constitutes the first Eastern bloc country to be recognised by IASA, a move which Khattar describes as a "breakthrough and important development in our increasing trend towards globalisation."

In keeping with this goal, several countries including Mexico, Senegal, Norway, Japan, Iran, Sweden and Central America, overall, are being studied for possible inclusion in the IASA network, Khattar said.

The next IASA board meeting will take place in Dublin in February with the 38th General Assembly scheduled for May 1990 in Vienna.

Make the right connections at

Middle East

ELECTRICITY

90

14-17 January 1990

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With well over 100 exhibitors from more than 20 countries taking part, the Middle East's big power show at the Dubai World Trade Centre is the place to be for all those involved in the electricity and electronics industry.

Celebrating ten years as the shop window for the industry, the Middle East Electricity exhibition remains the only specialist event of its kind in the region, attracting major manufacturers and suppliers from all over the world.

The show provides the ideal opportunity for buyers, to assess equipment and services, to negotiate distribution rights and to discuss joint ventures. And once again, it has the full support of the UAE Ministry of Electricity and Water.

Whatever your interests are in the power business, this is one event not to miss.

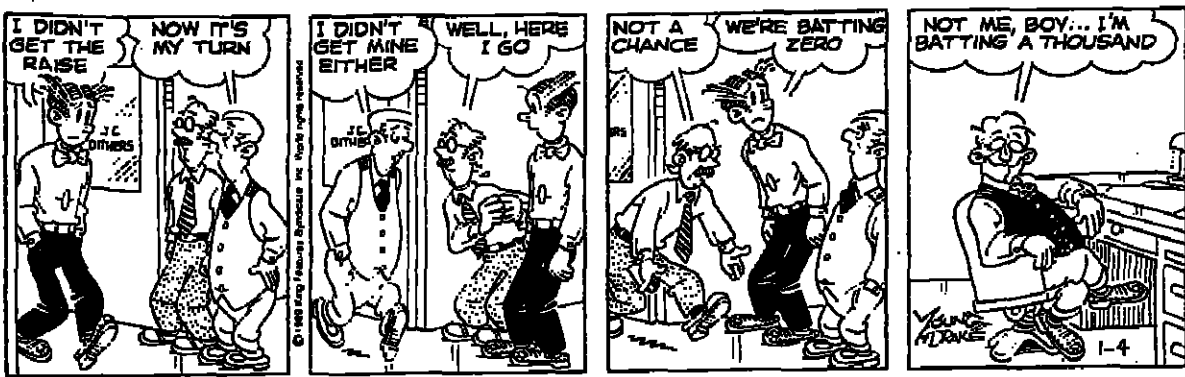
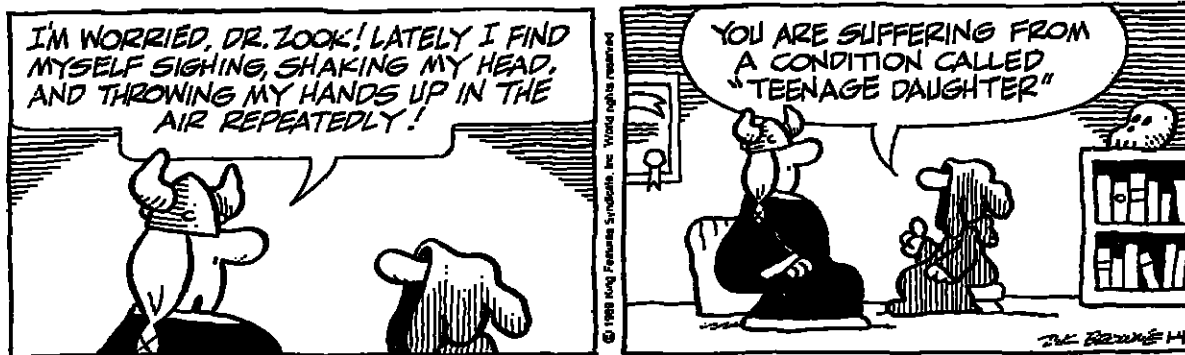
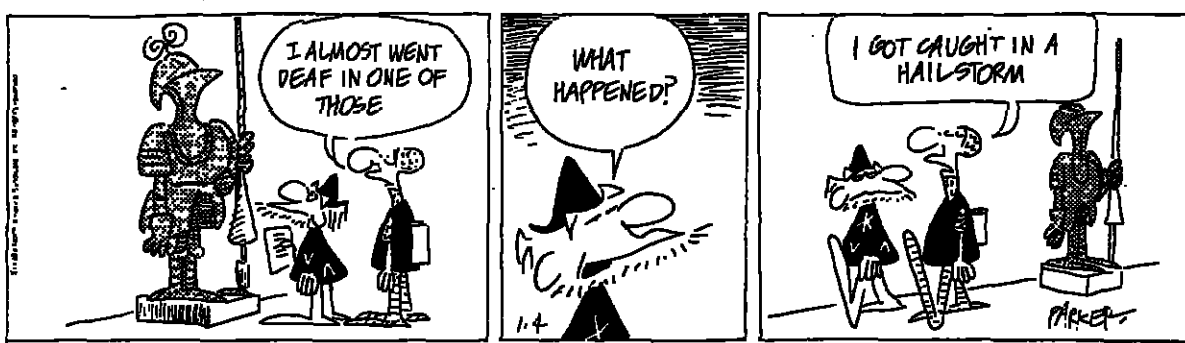
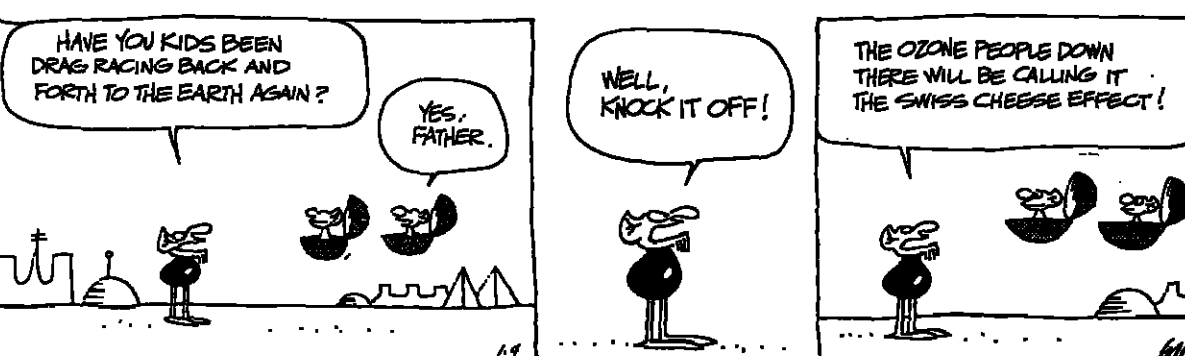
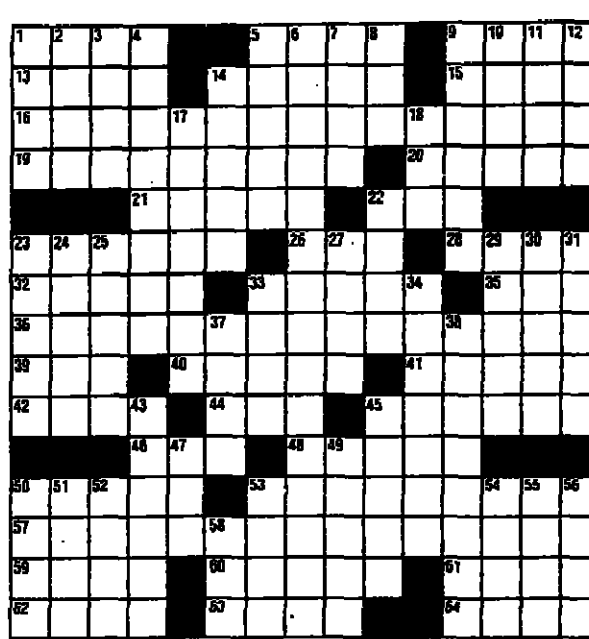
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- ACROSS**
- Caper
 - Ambracia, today
 - Reputation
 - Popular name in Oslo
 - Fast
 - Author Ludwig
 - Poste restante
 - Win, re-wise
 - Civic burden
 - Means of enforcement
 - "In" thing
 - Puts on
 - "— a man die, shall he live again?"
 - Job
 - Pronto, pls.
 - Chile con —
 - Savoy dance
 - UK honor
 - Ailing
 - Hula Bowl item
 - Sand bar
 - Cat's-paws
 - Entreated
 - Euripedes drama
 - Mortar adjunct
 - Country stopover
 - Dingles
 - Animated
 - Become passe
 - Candlestick
 - Park, for one
 - and anon
 - Grimaces
 - Like most basketball players
 - River in Cuba
 - CEO, usually
 - Sole
- DOWN**
- Poodles
 - "— a Song Go Out..."
 - Actor Andrews
 - Implication
 - Apporion
 - Patriotic colors
 - Adolescent
 - Part of NATO
 - Sagebrush State
 - NYSE neighbor
 - Bog
 - Cities in Minnesota and Nevada
 - Passes the peak
 - Short jackets
 - Give — whirl
 - Renown
 - Seal pelt
 - Group of experts
 - Do — (all out)
 - Capon
 - Not — (mediocre)
 - Hersey's — for Adano
 - Intintically
 - Go away!
 - Knee cap
 - Scarcely credible
 - Throw at
 - Frogmen
 - Machinations
 - N of Kan.
 - Double curves
 - Collude with
 - Bathe
 - Words of ken
 - Swan genus
 - Actress
 - Phillips
 - Choose
 - Peggotty: Dickens character
 - Fuse abbr.

ANSWER TO PREVIOUS PUZZLE:

SLEEPIS AWL PAIE
ANVIL STOA ERAS
STOLA MENDICANT
SOLON ANT NORSE
UTTERS ESSAYS
APT SAT ARI
REID TENNESSEE
TROUT NAE TENET
INCIDENCE ATIT
TED DOE EYE
SPRAIN CONDOIR
TIARA BIT ILLUM
EXTENSIVE CENSE
RIOT ADES TATER
NENIE GET SNORE

GOREN BRIDGE

BY CHARLES GOREN AND OMAR SHARIF

USE YOUR ASSETS WISELY

Both vulnerable. North deals.

NORTH

♠ A Q 8 5 2
♥ K J 9
♦ A 3
♣ A K 3

EAST

♠ K 9 7 6 3
♥ 6 5 2
♦ 10 7
♣ 9 7 4

SOUTH

♠ 4
♥ A Q 10 8 3
♦ Q 8 2
♣ Q J 10 6

The bidding:

North	East	South	West
2 NT	Pass	3 ♥	Pass
3 ♠	Pass	4 ♠	Pass
5 NT	Pass	7 ♥	Pass
Pass	Pass		

Opening lead: Jack of ♠

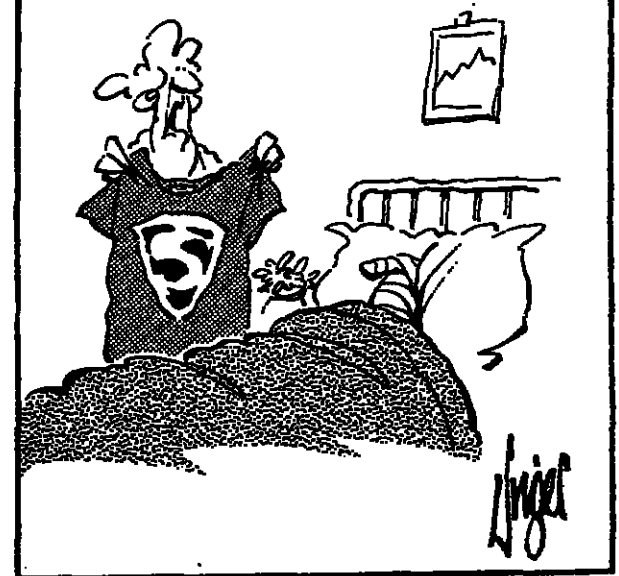
Before playing to the first trick, count your winners. Then make sure that you plan a line of play that will produce at least the number of tricks you need for your contract.

When South showed a heart suit, North's hand improved considerably. It contained a wealth of controls, good support and a ruffing value. North conveyed that with a cue-bid of his cheapest ace and

South's return cue-bid showed second-round spade control and slam aspirations. North launched into the Grand Slam Force, and an ambitious contract of seven hearts was reached when South held the two missing top trump honors.

West led the jack of spades, and there were only 11 fast tricks in sight. In view of the opening lead, the spade finesse was unlikely to succeed. One way to develop the extra tricks was to try to set up the spade suit. In the process, declarer came up with a remarkable dummy reversal.

South won the first trick with the ace and immediately ruffed a spade, noting the fall of the ten from West. A club to the king and another spade ruff confirmed the bad break in that suit. Now declarer had to hope for a 3-2 trump break. I sing the table's other club winner and ace of diamonds, in that order, as entries, declarer ruffed two more spades, the last with the ace of trumps. He still had a heart left with which to cross to the board to draw trumps. Declarer was then able to take two more club tricks in hand to bring home the bacon. In all, he made seven trump tricks (four via ruffs), one spade, one diamond and four clubs.



"They said you were wearing this when you fell off the roof."

YOUR STARS

Aries
March 21 - April 20

You will be pleased with yourself for having solved a tricky problem. Well done, but do not rest on your laurels. If you think there is plenty of time, you are wrong. Be reasonable.



Cancer
June 21 - July 20

You will have the wind in your sails but you are sailing in the wrong direction. However, it is not too late to make amends. Your lucky numbers are 17 and 41. Be observant.



Libra
Sept. 23 - Oct. 23

There will be a good opportunity but you will have to act fast if you do not want to miss it. You are more likely to be forgetful, so do not rely on your memory alone. Take the best care of your health. Be less dogmatic.



Capricorn
Dec. 21 - Jan. 19

You must avoid a too sedentary existence. Take some exercise but not so much that you feel exhausted. There will be some tensions and you should do all you can to minimize them. Show just a little more goodwill. Be sincere.



Taurus
April 21 - May 20

Nothing is quite to your liking but you will be able to cope with. You will be able to correct a mistake before it is too late. Make sure you do not eat too many sweet things. Be helpful.



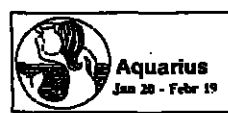
Leo
July 21 - Aug. 21

You will be right but you should not boast about it. You could just as easily have been wrong. Show a little more sympathy towards someone less fortunate than you. Use more commonsense. Be less impatient.



Scorpio
Oct. 23 - Nov. 22

If you ask for too much you will get less than if you were to be more reasonable. You should stick to your principles and have the courage of your convictions. Do not exceed safe limits. Be thorough.



Aquarius
Jan. 20 - Feb. 19

You are liable to be distracted and should do all you can to keep your mind on the job. Something you are learning will turn out to be not quite so easy, but do persevere. Not all is as it seems to be, so look beneath the surface too. Be tactful.



Gemini
May 21 - June 20

You will tire easily so do all you can to conserve your energies. Avoid leaving letters unanswered. Do not expect others to agree with all you say. Be fair.



Virgo
Aug. 23 - Sept. 22

Something you had not expected to happen will, but something you had expected would happen will not. Do not wait until the very last minute. Give others the benefit of the doubt. Be magnanimous.



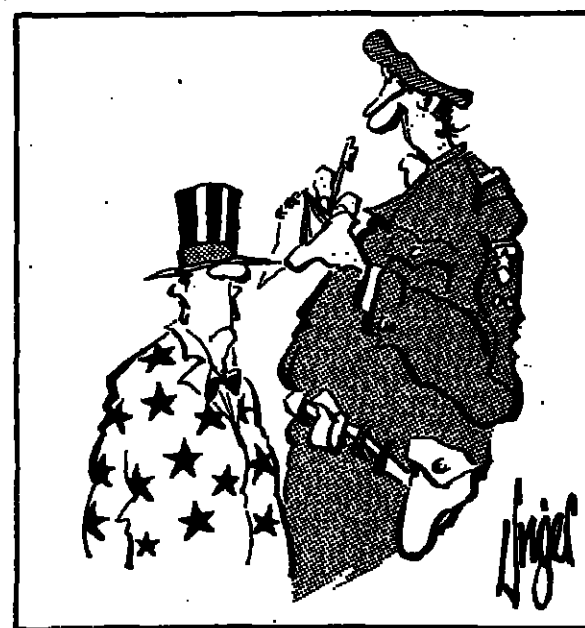
Sagittarius
Nov. 23 - Dec. 21

You will easily be irritated and should try to control yourself. Remember you too have your irritating side. You should make sure you do not get into bad habits and you should not be hostile to change. Be reliable.



Pisces
Feb. 20 - March 20

There is no need for pessimism but nor for excessive optimism either. Do not lose sight of your objectives. Not everything is to your liking but you will be able to live with it. Be more tolerant.



"You're being charged with 'disturbing the ambience.'"



"This is my husband, the last of the big suspenders."

مكالمات الهاتفية

Indian Cinema

Hindi films of 1990s

Quality needed for survival

By Firoze Rangoonwalla

WITH the dawn of 1990, not only do we look forward to the start of a new year but also of a new decade and that the last of the present century as well. The 90s will lead us to the 21st century, exactly a hundred year since motion pictures were invented and first shown in India. But does it hold a bright future for the Hindi cinema with its strange marketing slots.

For any art form or mass medium to survive, quality, variety and work discipline are a must. Sadly these are lacking in the big Bombay bazaar. Despite all that, there were various interesting things being cooked and these will see the light of the projector in the new year.

So what are the films we should look forward to, with some hope? First, let's turn to the 280 films, completed but not seen. Among them, the first to come will be those already bought up by distributors of all territories, followed by the ones to get sold by hook or crook. Here the star producers have an edge above others, as they can afford to wait to get big prices. Also to arrive will be those under production in 1989, which are abundantly financed or already bought for all zones.

The most awaited is Amitabh Bachchan and director Mukul Anand's 18-reel "Agneepath", a crime drama in Hollywood style, with the tall hero in an "angry" image without comedy, romance, songs, dances. These things will be left to the supporting cast of Madhvi, Mithun,

Neelam, Pran. The funny role of Mithun as a South Indian is being much talked about. Another star producer Rajesh Khanna's film "Jai Shiv Shankar" is also on the release schedule. Based on a Malayalam hit mixing crime and politics, its main attraction is that Dimple acts with ex-husband Rajesh, supported by Jeetendra, Poonam, Chunky and Sangeta. R.D. Burman has given good music after a big gap.

Harmesh Malhotra's "Amiri Garibi" with Jeetendra, Rekha, Rishi, Babbar, Poonam, Neelam, Pran could be another staple hit. Hema Malini's "Awari" directed by Mahesh Bhatt, with Anil Kapoor, Meenakshi, Govinda may come if only the Bengal zone gets sold. Lesser hopes for Hema's "Maarg", having shades of Osho Rajnish's life, played by Anupam Kher, with Hema also acting opposite Vinod Khanna and Dimple. It is still unsold for 13 sub-divided zones. Deepak Bahry's much-delayed formula stuff "Humse Na Takrana" with Dharm, Shatrui, Mithun, Anita Raj, Kimi may overcome some hassles and get released. So too Rajendra Kumar's "Jurrat".

On a smaller scale, Ramsay's "Kaali Ganga" with Dimple as a dacoit may get a matinee screening. So too "Khatarnak" with Sanjay Dutt, Anita, Farha, "Khule-Aam" by Guru Dutt's son Arun having Dharm, Chunky, Neelam, "Mahasangram" with Vinod Khanna, Madhuri, Govinda, Aditya, Sonu Walia and debutante Shaheen (Dilip Kumar's niece), B.

Subhash's "Pyar Ke Nam Qurban" with Mithun, Dimple, Mandakini and Bappi Lahiri's music, Raj Sippy's "Qurbani Rang Layegi" with Sanjay Dutt, Padmini, Poonam, Sawan Kumar's "Souten Ki Beti" with Jeetendra, Rekha, Jaya Prada, Dipinti and a few more. But what about more than 200 other films lying in the vault?

Next on the charts are the films progressing fast when the year begins, to be (hopefully) completed and released before December. They can be spotted from the progress they have made (anything between ten and fifteen reels). R.K.'s "Henna" is a six reels ready but the remaining work will be fast, since the heroine is new and free. Other brother Shashi will surely release his Indo-Soviet "Ajooba" (19 reels) with Amitabh, Rishi, Dimple, Sonam and Russian artistes. Ramesh Sippy's "Akeela", also with Amitabh, and having Jackie, Meenakshi, Amrita, and Shashi Kapoor himself is nearing completion and almost sold out. Chandra Barot's "Boss" with Vinod Khanna and Jaya Prada looks another certain arrival.

Aamir Khan, the hot cake of 88-89 was pushed into the cold by "Love Love Love" and "Raakh". His films are lying mostly unsold, like "Dil" and "Deewana Mujhsa Nahin" both with Madhuri, and "Daulat Ki Jung" with Jubi. Dev Anand's "Awwal Number" and Aamir's family production "Tum Mere Ho" if sold may resurrect his hero image. Anil and Jackie are riding the crest of success and there will be no lack of money for

their films, like "Gang", "Angaar", "Kishan Kanhaiya", "Benam Badshah", "Ghar Ho To Aisa", "Hisab Chukta". So too for B.O. favourite Mithun's films, like "Yugandhar".

Among other big new films for the year there will be Shakti Samanta's "Dushman" with Mithun and Mandakini, Sattee Shouri's "Farishtay" having multiple stars Dharm, Vinod Khanna, Rajnikant, Sri Devi and even Jaya Prada as guest. K.R. Reddy's "Garipa" with Sri Devi, Rishi and Vinod Khanna (the winning combination of "Chandni"). N. Chandra's "Humraa" (Dharm, Anil, Meenakshi, Kimi) and "Narsimha" (Sunny, Dimple), Babbar's own "Karm Yodha" with himself and Dimple, Deepak Sareen's "Ranbhoomi" with Jeetendra, Shatrughan, Rishi and Dimple, Boney Kapoor and Satish Kaushik's "Roop Ki Rani, Choron Ka Raja" with Anil, Jackie, Sri Devi and David Dhavan's "Swarg" having Govinda, Jubi, Rajesh Khanna and so on. Also "Ghar Ka Chirag" with Rajesh, Chunky, Neelam.

There are strange cases of notable films which may or may not arrive. Sunil Dutt's "Yeh Aag Kab Bujhegi" on the dowry problem, with himself, Rekha and Sheeba lies unsold everywhere unless he gets tax exemption. B.R. and Ravi Chopra were so busy with TV serial "Mahabharat" that they have failed to attract distributors for "Dharam Shakti" with Sunil, Mithun, Gaurav, Neelam, Sujata. "Lekin" of Lata Mangeshkar with Dimple and Vinod is avoided because Gulzar's name is B.O. poison. Rekha's ambitious "Madam Z" and "Sheshnaag" are also in suspense. Ramesh Sippy's multi-star "Zameen" (Vinod, Sri Devi, Sanjay Dutt, Madhuri) showed slow progress till now.

But before the year ends, there may be a big show if Subhash Ghai pulls off his "Saudagar" with egotists like Raj Kumar and Dilip Kumar, aided by Jackie, Anupam, Amrishi. And his new find Manisha Koirala along with R.K.'s Zeba Bakhtiar and Dev's Fatima Sheikh may prove to be the bright spots on the new year's horizon.

Behind the screen

Kamal Amrohi's son Tajdar has taken an unusual vow in the following words: "Aye Mere Allah. Give me wisdom, give me courage, give me strength. For I, Tajdar Amrohi, having bequeathed (sic: wrong word) my faith in you, humbly declare that I shall never write or direct a film in future, if I fail to hit the bull's eye with my very first picture "Ek Number Ka Chor", and if I fail to satisfy the masses, classes and critics with my film". But we wonder what he will do or say if his movie fails to get buyers or gets a shabby release in small centres. Will he then blame the Bombay trade or stick to his oath and leave the industry?

For "Henna", the R.K. camp and hero Rishi are taking the "Chandni" success too much for granted. They proclaim: "Only love... no sex, no violence in our film". But then the R.K. tradition and secret of success are to expose the heroines. Perhaps, they are scared of what Pakistan's Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto advised new heroine Zeba and also Randhir Kapoor. The new girl herself is dead against body exposure. So indus-

try people say in mocking tones: "What will a R.K. film be without sex, without a 'Chandni' like Sri Devi and that too directed by Randhir Kapoor and not the great showman?"

Muzaffar Ali completed eleven reels of his film "Zooni" with Dimple as the Kashmiri poetess Habba Khatoon. But further progress was blocked as finance dried up and the film lay "open" for sale of all territories. To add to Muzaffar's cup of misery Shabana suddenly pulled up the producer for non-payment of dues on the earlier film "Anjuman", another film lying unreleased for years. The industry associations took steps to stop work on "Zooni" till Shabana is paid off. Was the lady showing her artistic anger or professional one against Dimple being taken as heroine?

Star interview

Kumar Gaurav

With Bunt as pet name in industry and Kumar Gaurav as screen name, Rajendra Kumar's son came with a bang in "Love Story" but ended with a whimper of terrible flops. The teeny bopper hero soon found his lollipop fans doing the vanishing trick. What went wrong? Gaurav himself explains as he looks forward to his next attempt "Jurrat".

Q. How do you analyse the abrupt break-up of your career after a resounding success, which made you a teen idol?

A. Yeah, "Love Story" was great. But the young audience is very fickle and fast. They change their fads every three months or so. My mistake was to sign only moony romantic films. "Teri Kasam", "Lovers", "Romance"... that too with Poonam who is no teenager... flopped and threw me in the dumps. Now I realise that the youth audience likes a fresh romantic pair only once, in their debut. Look at Kamala Hassan — Rati, Dimple — Rishi and even Aamir Khan — Jubi Chawla. After that they want another fresh pair.

Q. So where did you go wrong?

A. May be I should have taken up different roles, and with young new heroines.

Q. How did you still manage to survive?

A. The industry people are very kind. They don't reject you totally. They keep finding new ways for you, like "Goonj".

Q. Was it your father's clout that brought you roles?

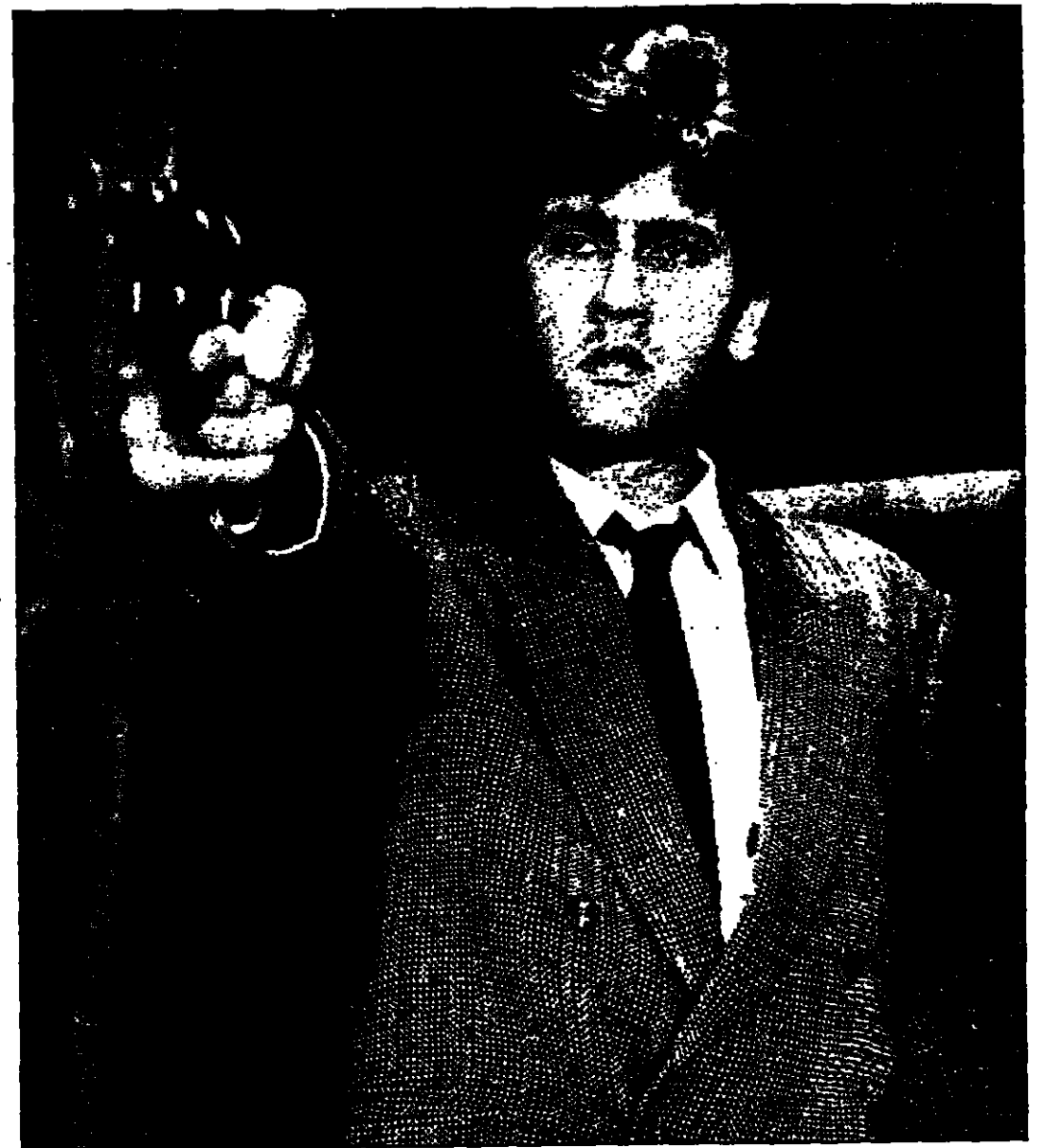
A. Nobody's father can tell any producer to sign anybody for any film.

Q. But your papa is also blamed for wrongly steering your career. Is it true?

A. We had our differences. But as a helpful father he did his best. We have our own family productions and the Mudra people are also very keen to have me. That's how I did films like "Naam" and "Janam".

Q. What about the quarrels with directors which your father had as a producer?

A. It's a question of principles. A director should not get too bossy. But I have no quarrels with Mahesh Bhatt, Rahul Rawail etc. David Dhavan has done an excellent job of "Jurrat" and I am doing a straight young hero's role, in that.



Kumar Gaurav in 'Jurrat'



Jackie Shroff and Sudha Deshpande in 'Angaar'



Vinod Khanna and Amjad Khan in 'Lekin'



The big "A" of 1990 — "Agneepath" with Amitabh and Madhuri

Sri Lanka's beloved elephant is preserved for the nation

By Minoli de Soysa

COLOMBO (Reuters): Raja, the national treasure, has been preserved for posterity.

The magnificently tusked, nine-foot, six inch (three-metre) tall elephant, who died at the age of 66, was Sri Lanka's best-loved animal.

His admirers included former president Junius Jayewardene who provided the 153,000 rupees (\$3,825) needed for the prodigious feat of taxidermy.

To many Sri Lankans, Raja shed an almost god-like status. Each August for 50 years, beginning in 1937, the richly caparisoned Raja carried a sacred Buddhist relic on his broad back during the annual Kandy Perahera, a festival highlighted by a colourful procession to the Temple of the Tooth.

Sri Lanka's Buddhists, 70 per cent of the island's 17 million people, believe the gold casket that Raja carried through the streets of the ancient hill capital of Kandy contains a tooth relic

of the Buddha.

The task of carrying the relic in the annual procession, a major tourist attraction, is given only to the most special of elephants.

They have to meet strict physical criteria, the proper height and width, have large tusks as well as determination and patience to brave the noisy, hot journey through jostling crowds.

Captured in 1925 when he was just two years old and four feet, five inches (1.3 metres) high, Raja was donated to the temple by a Kandy resident a few years later.

Raja was declared a national treasure by Jayewardene in 1985 and so he had to be preserved after his death.

"In 1988 I was in Kenya and when looking through a book on elephants saw that an animal named Ahmed had been stuffed and kept in the museum there. I decided this was the answer," said Naranjan Wijeyeratne, cus-

todian of the Temple of the Tooth, which houses the relic and now houses Raja.

The much-photographed Raja had been sick for some time and the decision had been taken that he was too feeble to carry the casket in the 1988 procession.

"I think he knew that, that's why he died," said Wijeyeratne.

Immediate action was vital.

"I knew that if the skin started deteriorating, nothing could be done," said National Museum director Dr Thelma Gunawardana, who along with her team of taxidermists, took on the task of preserving the legendary beast.

Since this was the first time such a procedure had been attempted in Sri Lanka, Gunawardana said she had to resist pressure to bring in foreign experts.

"I was confident we had the expertise to do it," she said.

"First we took precise measurements so that he could be reconstructed exactly. Then

he was skinned in one huge sheet. The skin was treated with large amounts of preservatives and brought to Colombo along with the skull and tusks."

COLOMBO (Reuters): Sri Lanka, torn apart by ethnic conflicts, has taken a step towards the integration of its battling Sinhalese and Tamil communities. It will introduce compulsory education in both languages for all the island's children.

Education Minister W.J.M. Lokubandara said children would be taught both Sinhala and Tamil, the languages of the main communities, as well as a link tongue — English.

"This will constitute the first step towards promotion of national integration," Lokubandara said.

Sinhalese account for 74 per cent of the island's 16 million people with Tamils making up 18 per cent and Muslims eight per cent.

After Sri Lanka became independent from Britain in 1948, English remained the language of administration for a decade until Sinhala was made the official language in a move that triggered violent protests from Tamils.

National integration through language

Children were separated into two streams in schools, each taught in their mother tongue, further sharpening the division of the country along ethnic lines.

Tamils accused the government of discriminating against them in language, employment and land allocation.

In 1975, the leading Tamil political party, the Tamil United Liberation Front, demanded a separate homeland.

Tamil youths took up the cry and formed militant groups to fight the Sri Lankan army in a campaign to set up an independent state in the northeast, where most Tamils live.

As the Sri Lankan army, made up mainly of Sinhalese, moved to crush the rebellion, the Indian

government bowed to pressure from the 60 million Tamils in its southern states and intervened.

Colombo, pressed by New Delhi, agreed to grant the Tamils powers to run their own affairs in the northeast.

At Colombo's invitation, India sent about 50,000 troops to the island to help enforce the pact and suppress the uprising. They are now being pulled out and about 25,000 remain.

About 10,000 people have died in the bloody ethnic conflict that has racked the palm-fringed island, once a popular tourist destination, for six years.

Under the proposed scheme, Sinhalese children will be taught the Tamil language during their first six years at school. Tamil children will learn Sinhala for a similar period.

"To me it is Raja, only thing is that he is not breathing," said a satisfied Wijeyeratne.

realistic touches like musk at the eyes added.

The skin was put over like a blanket, the tusks pushed into the sockets, glass eyes fixed and

begin in a room of the main temple. The stuffing actually consisted of making a replica of the elephant out of treated wood, hard

pasterboard, plaster of Paris and fibre.

the skin was taken back to Kandy where the procedure

was done.

Once the funds were released, the skin was taken back to Kandy where the procedure

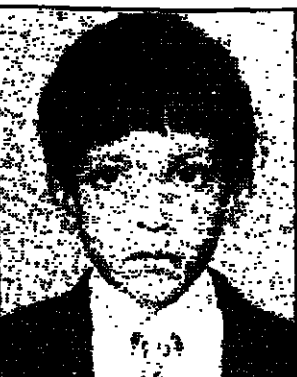
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Happy birthday



Kamran Ali turned 11 on December 6



Punaki Banerjee turned 9 on December 29



Subodh Kumar turned 13 on December 26



Nazreen turned 7 on December 31



S. Farheen turned 12 on December 30



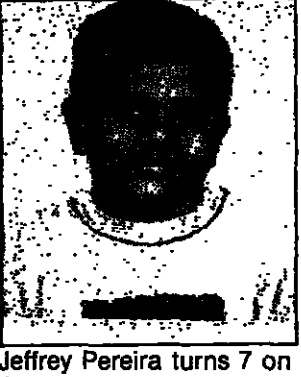
Jamil Joseph Estorninos turned 4 on January 2



Osman Khan turned 13 on January 1



Shaista and Mohammed turn 2 today, January 4



Jeffrey Pereira turns 7 on January 5



Aarthi Jayaram turns 7 on January 6



Sachin Rampal turns 6 on January 7



Kingsley Colaso turns 5 on January 6

Things Changing In My Neighborhood



How many things can you find that are changing in your neighborhood?

Materials Needed: this paper, pencil, crayons

Procedure

1. Go for a "change" walk with your class. Take this paper and a pencil with you.
2. Find some things that are changing and draw them in the boxes.
3. Color this page when you get back to class.



Hypothesis
I think I can find _____ things changing in my neighborhood.

Changing size:	Changing color:
Changing shape:	Changing number:
Changing place:	Changing temperature:
Changing every day:	Changing every minute:

Results and Conclusions

1. How many things did you find changing in your neighborhood? _____
2. Is that what you thought you would find? _____
3. What did you learn? _____

Young poet

Dreams

I don't know the meaning
Nor what it is.
Thought I feel it around me.
Above me, behind me.
It always surrounds me.
Why then, is it so far away?
Beyond my reach
My dreams, I hold them tight.
Never to leave them ever
Should these be let go?
How then, should I live
Feel the sweetness of my life
Should I wake up now?
Or dream some more?
Will it be there for me?
To hold me tight
Should I wait.
Take the chances.
Is there the time?
Then, let it not be so.
For my dreams love me more.
And I love them forever.
More than love could love me.
Or her love, love me so.
Let me not wander.
For the wait is long.
But, life so short.
Let me love me.
For I will always be there.
When I need me, want me.
Wait I shall not.
Like breeze flying high, swishing past by.
Love I shall, but, only me.
Until the right love.
Will understand, take my hand.
And love me more than I love myself.
Rajat Kapoor

Variety

Vitamin A intake

Finding the safety threshold

WASHINGTON, (UPI): Tales of vitamin A toxicity are often bizarre, centering on Arctic explorers eating huge amounts of polar bear liver or fitness fanatics gobbling handfuls of vitamin supplements.

But Americans should be aware that more subtle overloads of vitamin A might pose some serious health risks, particularly to pregnant women, children and the elderly, federal nutrition experts say.

The ideal vitamin A intake for the average man is about 3,100 to 3,300 international units (IU) daily, according to the National Research Council's 1989 edition of the recommended dietary allowances (RDAs).

But Dr. John Hatchcock of the Food and Drug Administration estimates 3 per cent to 4 per cent of the US population take vitamin supplements containing 25,000 IU or more of vitamin A per day.

"That's a heck of a lot of people. If even 1 per cent of the population are taking potentially toxic doses, that's too high," said Hatchcock, adding the FDA is still trying to determine at what level the vitamin meets the government's "generally recognized as safe" standard.

So far, vitamin A toxicity — which may include bone abnormalities and life-threatening liver damage — has only been conclusively shown in adults who consistently consume more than 50,000 IU daily of vitamin A and young children who take more than 20,000 IU daily.

But Hatchcock said a growing body of research indicates the vitamin A safety threshold may be far lower for certain high-risk groups.

"The question is not the upper limits, but rather how little can possibly cause problems," the nutrition expert told a recent seminar.

Vitamin A is a group of compounds essential to vision, cell growth and immune function.

In nutritional supplements, vitamin A generally refers to retinol, also known as "pre-formed vitamin A." Food sources of pre-formed vitamin A are primarily limited to liver and fish liver oils, and it is rare for toxicity to stem from diet alone, Hatchcock said.

The body can also convert precursors called carotenoids into vitamin A. Carotenoids, which are found in carrots, spinach and many other vegetables, are absorbed through the intestine far less efficiently than retinoids. But they are not known to be toxic even when taken in large doses over long periods of time.

Much of the worry over vitamin A's safety arose in the mid-80's after it became evident that the anti-acne drug accutane, which is a powerful analog of retinol, caused birth defects if taken during the early weeks of pregnancy.

Hatchcock said evidence is now "close to compelling" that daily vitamin A consumption exceeding 100,000 IU by pregnant women can cause miscarriages and birth defects, mainly of the face and skull, in their fetuses.

For daily intakes between 20,000 and 100,000 IU, Hatchcock said "modest evidence" for vitamin A-related birth defects exists. The FDA researcher said in his opinion, problems likely arise "in the 25,000 IU bracket, maybe as low as 20,000 IU."

There currently is no persuasive evidence to link birth defects to daily consumption below 20,000 IU, Hatchcock said.

The FDA researcher advised pregnant women to take low to moderate-potency vitamin supplements with vitamin A levels in the 4,000 to 5,000 IU range. And he warned that it would be "imprudent" to take formulas that contain several times the RDA of vitamin A.

The vitamin A supplements most commonly on the market range in potency from 2,500 to 20,000 IU, but there are some 25,000 IU products on the market, according to the Council for Responsible Nutrition, a trade group for the supplement industry.

The council recommends supplements formulated for use by pregnant women contain no more than 8,000 IU of vitamin A per day. In addition, any women who could become pregnant should not take more than 10,000 IU per day, except on the advice of a doctor, the group said.

Another recent study indicated the elderly may also be at increased risk for lower level vitamin A toxicity, perhaps experiencing problems from long-term use in the 5,000 to 10,000 IU per day range, Hatchcock said.

But the FDA official cautioned the liver damage found in the older people may not be a direct result of vitamin A overload. He said vitamin A may be just unmasking "silent," pre-existing liver damage, such as that caused by viral hepatitis. Other factors, including alcohol and the antibiotic tetracycline, may also impair the body's ability to handle vitamin A, he said.



McCartney in concert

Ex-Beatle rock star Paul McCartney performs during the opening concert of his world tour at Birmingham's National Exhibition Centre Jan 2. (Reuters wirephoto)

Shedding pristine image

Singapore luring in tourists

SINGAPORE, (Reuters): Singapore attracts more and more tourists each year but is having to spend money to slow a decline in market share caused by its pristine image.

"We expect the tourist inflow will grow annually at an average eight to 10 per cent over the next three years," says Evelyn Sen, marketing director of the Singapore Tourist Promotion Board.

The number of visitors has been increasing steadily, with 4.18 million visitors arriving in 1988. 14 per cent more than in 1987. The number of tourists for 1989 is estimated at 4.8 million.

However, the tourist board is concerned because Singapore now gets just 10 per cent of total visitors to the Far East against 17 per cent 14 years ago. Most visitors head for Thailand, Hong Kong and Malaysia for entertainment and fun, tour operators say.

The impression, particularly in Western cities, that Singapore is just another clinical, modern and business city needs to be corrected, Sen said.

"We want to project Singapore's multiracial people... various cultural and food festivals and varying lifestyles... (as) part of an Asian tradition," she said.

As part of this effort, Singapore has earmarked 30 million dollars \$15 million for festivities to continue for months as part of its 25th anniversary of independence.

The show includes a cultural month designated for each of the

island's three major communities — Chinese, Malay and Indian — and will feature fireworks, music, sports and an arts festival.

The tourist board and businessmen plan to invest close to three billion dollars (\$1.5 billion) in the coming years to build entertainment and leisure complexes, officials say.

Quaint shops in Chinatown exuding oriental charm, and the 102-year-old Raffles hotel, which gave the world the Singapore sling cocktail, are being renovated to disprove that Singapore is only a modern city.

"We hope to offer the visitor a different and interesting holiday experience by 1992," Sen said.

Tourism is vital to Singapore's economy. An average five billion dollars (\$2.5 billion) a year makes up about 10 per cent of the country's gross national product.

Bugis Street, famous for its transvestites until it was demolished in 1985, is being re-created, the city's only major night spot under the open sky.

Offshore Sentosa island, to which visitors are taken by boats or cable cars to a butterfly park or a war museum, is being turned into a livelier setting, with three hotels overlooking a white beach and the sea.

Said Alan Choe, chairman of the Sentosa Development Corporation: "The hotels are part of the corporation's effort to encourage tourists to stay longer at the island resort."

Sixty old warehouses and shops alongside the promenade of the Singapore River are being

converted into cafes, hawkers centres and taverns.

The 130 million dollar (\$65 million) project undertaken by a local bank will allow customers to order meals by the riverside as they watch misty skyscrapers housing banks and the stock exchange across the river.

Haw Par Villa, also called Tiger Balm Gardens, closed for renovation since July 1988, will be reopened in the middle of 1990 with statues and tableaux from the 15th-century Chinese Ming dynasty.

Chinese junks will ferry visitors about a lake to encounter electronically operated animated spirits and dragons associated with Chinese mythologies.

A highlight at the botanic gardens, now getting a 50 million dollar (\$25 million) facelift, is a 20 metre (60 foot), pyramid-shaped glass greenhouse for plants.

But tour operators say rising hotel rents could dampen Singapore's long-standing attraction as a cheap destination.

Five-star hotel rooms cost 30 per cent more than they did in 1988 and the price is likely to go up. Expansion of the hotel industry has trailed the tourist boom.

There will be a shortage of 1,000 rooms by 1992 although eight more hotels will be built by then, they said.

Many developers are reluctant to open more rooms because they fear a reputation of the 1985 recession. At the height of the recession then, occupancy rates dropped to 65 per cent as growth in hotel rooms outstripped tourist arrivals.

Britons opting for secular funerals with the personal touch

LONDON, (Reuters): When a veteran soccer player wanted to be cremated in a spherical coffin shaped like a football, it was all in a day's work for Maevie Denby.

She has also organised funerals where members of the congregation danced the tango or performed a circus juggling routine.

Denby specialises in conducting non-religious funerals with the personal touch and says more and more Britons are demanding such ceremonies.

She pointed to a pile of 50 or 60 letters that had arrived that morning at the London offices of the British Humanist Association (BHA), saying people wanted a change from

the often "impersonal" services provided by churches.

"Every life is as unique as a fingerprint," she said in an interview. "Generalised words won't do."

The number of non-religious funerals in Britain has jumped from only 600 two years ago to more than 5,000 in 1989.

Denby, 48, who is the BHA's national co-ordinator, has conducted more than 700 funerals herself in the past seven or eight years.

The number of "officiants" who conduct secular ceremonies for the BHA has doubled to more than 150 in recent months and Denby is planning to open the association's first

office outside London, in the southern city of Salisbury.

The association has also produced a 60-page guide for people who want to arrange non-religious funerals for friends or relatives — or, in advance, for themselves.

Apart from committed non-believers, demand for non-religious funerals is coming from people keen to escape from routine church services carried out by clergymen who have never met the deceased.

"People don't want to be forced into a service that is meaningless for the person who has died," Denby said. "The point is that people have a choice."

There is no end to people's ingenuity in devising services to match the quirks and peculiarities of the dead.

The soccer-player in his football-shaped coffin was sent to his last resting place with a eulogy to his triumphs on the pitch specially composed by Denby.

A circus performer's last rites were interrupted for a few minutes by his sons, who juggled solemnly in front of the coffin before it was rolled into a crematorium's furnace.

The family of a young girl who died in a car crash played the music of the pop star Madonna at her funeral while others have

gone to meet their maker to Scott Joplin's ragtime piano.

At the funeral of a noted ballroom dancer two years ago, the mourners performed a tango inside the crematorium and then waltzed out of the door.

"It's not all doom and gloom," said Denby, although she concedes that this funeral did not go down very well with the crematorium staff.

At another funeral, the undertaker told her the night before that the body had begun to decay and should be cremated at once. This was done and at the ceremony the next day, a

coffin filled with metal weight was consigned to the flames.

"Never in the history of mankind has a metal weight had such a solemn end," Denby recalled.

Her first funeral was probably one of the most memorable. It was interrupted by a power cut just as the coffin was sliding through the curtains into the furnace, but when the power was restored, the coffin suddenly reappeared.

"That was awful — my very first one," she said. "The coffin slid backwards and forwards."

مكتبة الأمل

Dear Juniorreaders,

To criticize means to pass a judgement, or find fault with a certain thing. During school you are often criticized about your homework (if it is not up to your normal standard, or bad).

You are also taught how to criticize both academically and in everyday life. How many times has a teacher asked you "Now what may be wrong with this sentence? Does it make sense? If not, why?" You answer is a judgement, a criticism.

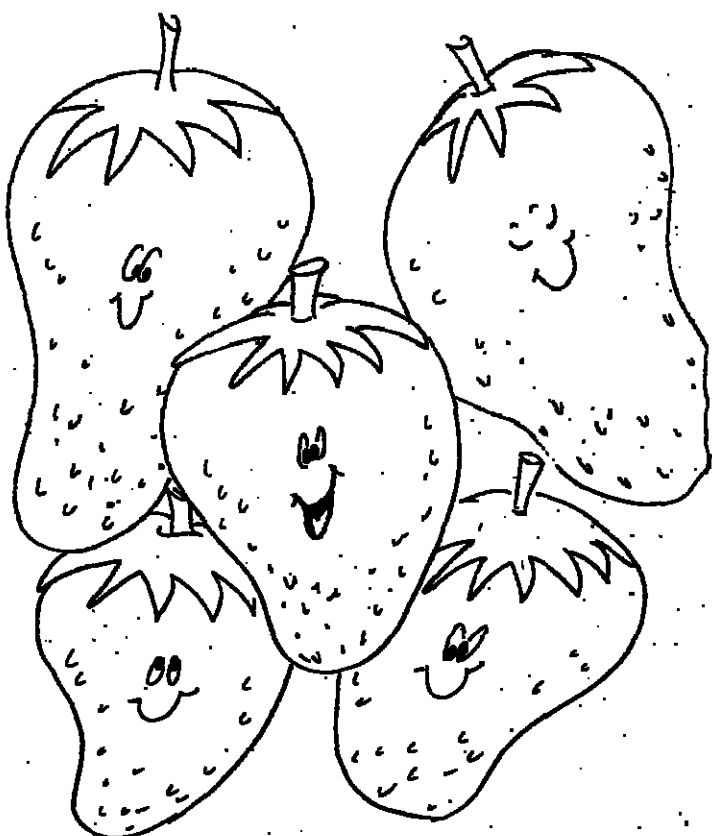
Criticism is an art: the art of judging. It should be handled with care.

If you have a point to bring up, you must have logical reasoning to prove it. An example of such is Amina Raza's letter to KTV last week. She criticized the types of programmes offered to young viewers on KTV and called for less violent programmes which help school students relax after a hard day. She underlined her points sensibly and I am sure her letter was taken into consideration.

However, if you are not sure of the points you want to bring up, do not bother. Never criticize something you are unable to prove, or something that is too insignificant to comment on. This will make you look foolish and your point will be entirely ignored.

Manal

Colour Timing



Strawberries

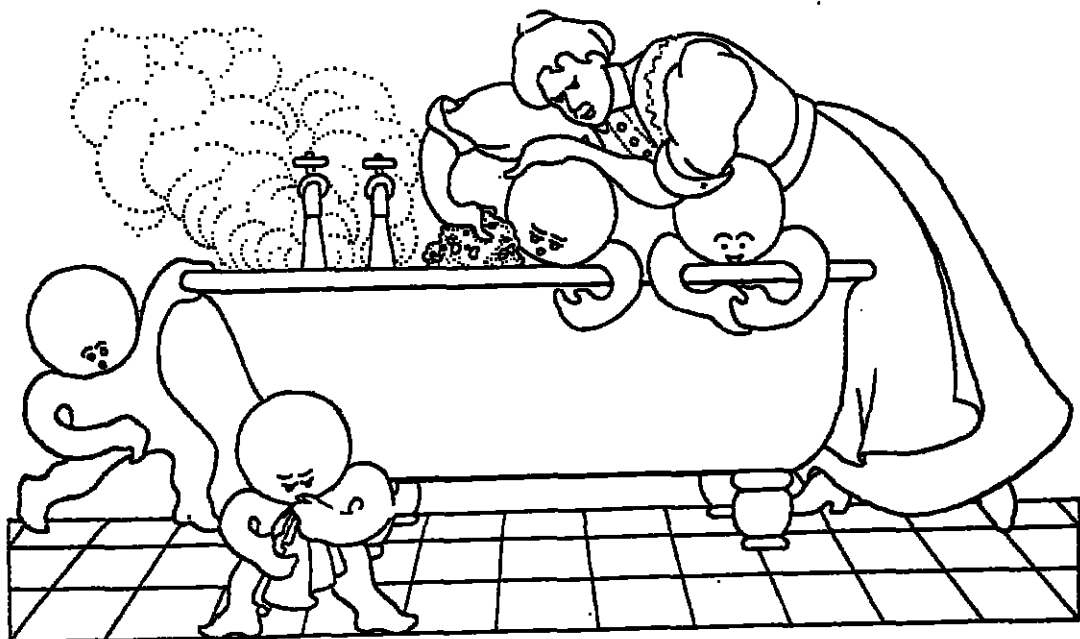
Word search

SELECTED SINGERS

ANKA (Paul)
BENNETT (Tony)
BOONE (Pat)
CHARLES (Ray)
COMO (Perry)
CROSSBY (Bing)
DAMONE (Vic)
FISHER (Eddie)
GAYE (Marvin)
GIBB (Andy)
GRANT (Gogi)
KALLEN (Kitty)
LAINE (Frankie)
LANZA (Mario)
PAGE (Patti)
PRESLEY (Elvis)
REEVES (Jim)
SNATRA (Frank)
STAFFORD (Jo)
STARR (Kay)
VALLI (Frankie)
VINTON (Bobby)

A D V O R A V A L L I C M
S T A F F O R D A M O N E
B B I G E T L E E Y A G N
F K E G A P O N E L L A K
B O O N E E Q L S V R P T
O B I J N T S K R E E Y T
A S T I U E D Z H V R S O
G E A R R A T S E I T X C
L L R P T A I T W N H O R
Q R I F V F T F A T M I O
S A N I B T C R J O G K S
W H I T I N G A K N A R B
G C H B A Z N A L Y N N Y

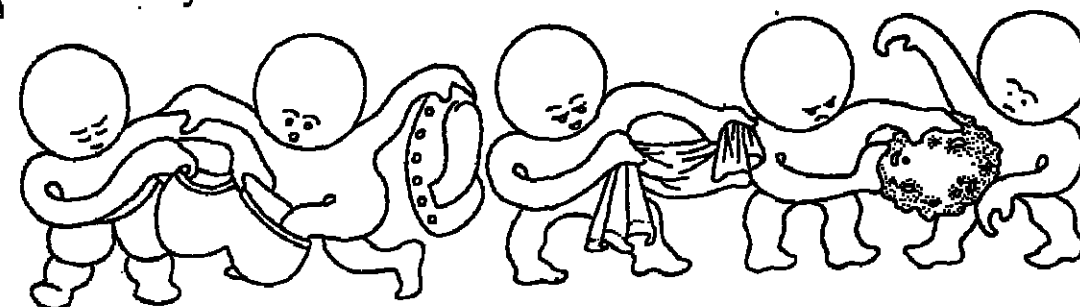
The Goops again



CLEANLINESS

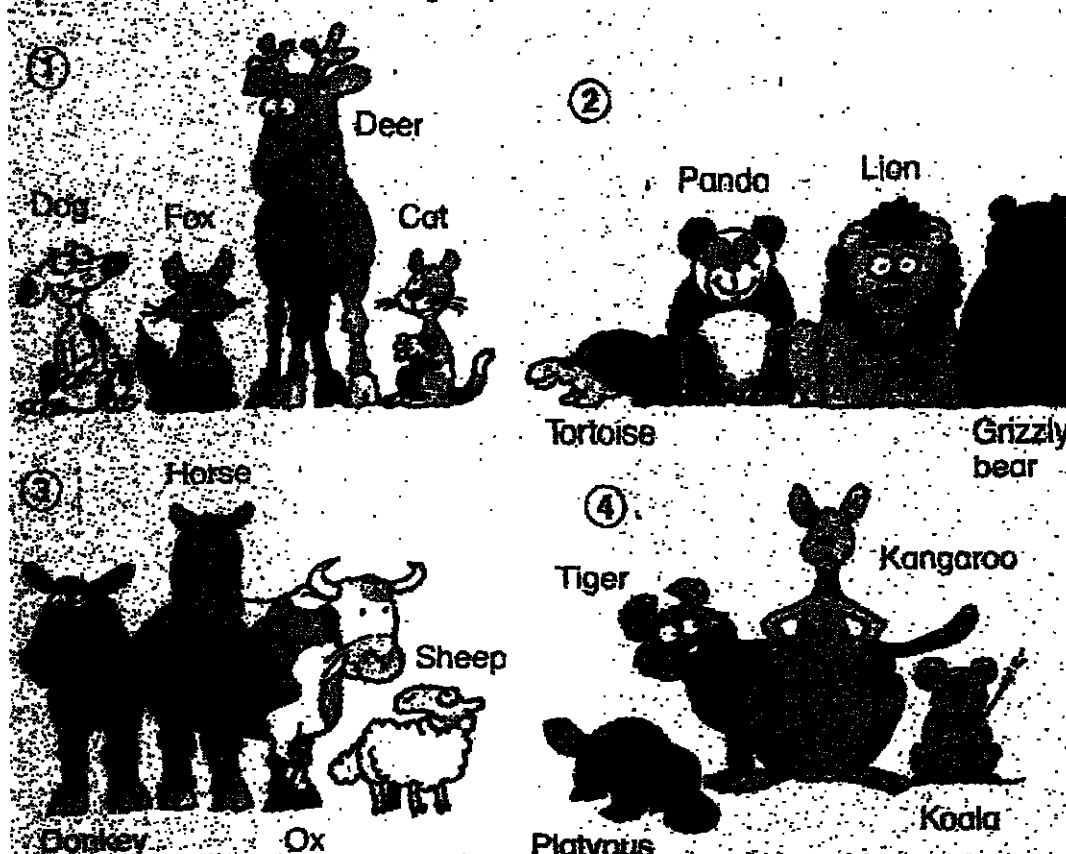
The Goops they are spotted on chin and on cheek,
You could dig the dirt off with a trowel!
But *you* wash your face twenty times every week,
And you don't do it *all* with the towel!

The Goops are all dirty, and what do they do?
They like to be dirty, and stay so.
But if *you* were dirty, you'd wash, would n't you?
If you needed a bath, you would say so!



Odd animal out

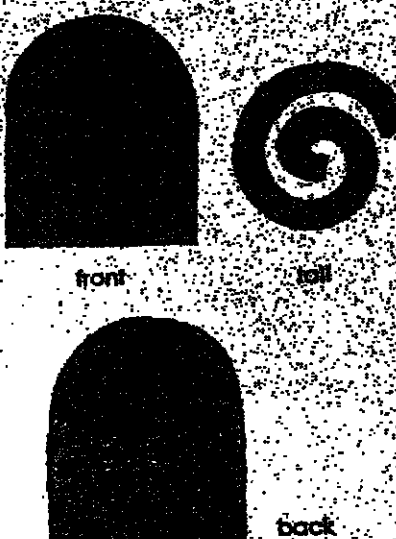
Spot the odd one out in each group.



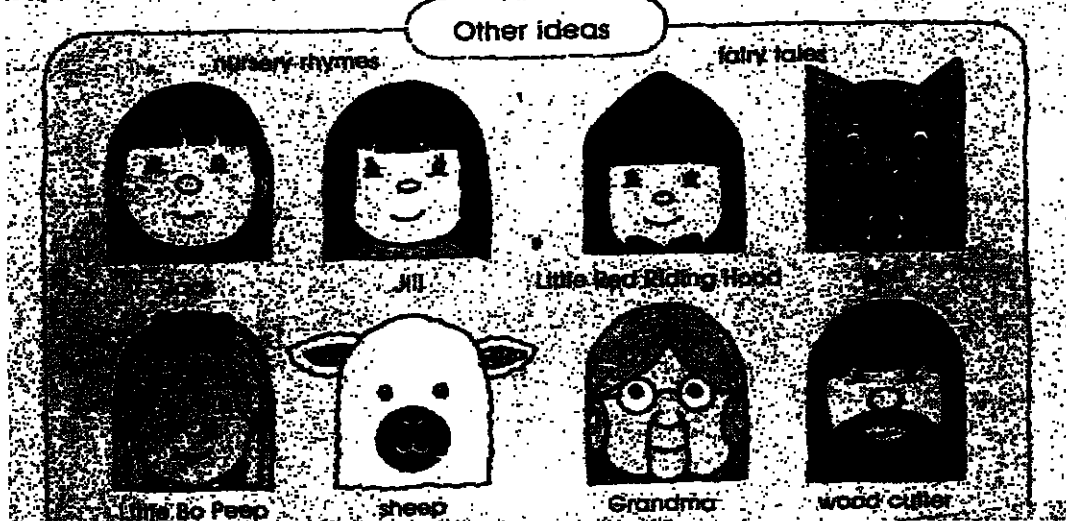
Finger puppets

Make the puppets from stiff paper, card or felt. You could trace the templates below.

Draw or stick on features and a curly tail for the pigs.



This little piggy went to market.
This little piggy stayed at home.
This little piggy had roast beef
and this little piggy had none.
And this little piggy
cried wee-wee-wee
all the way home!



What is wrong in this picture?



The Hob Nobs

By Julie Hodgson



THE Hob Nob family were a funny lot. They were family of little people, no bigger than your thumb, they lived in an old shoe, which was made from soft leather.

Mummy Hob Nob was always cooking nettle soup, Daddy Hob Nob was always collecting nettles, for the soup of course. Nina Hob Nob had a short stubby nose and was always talking in rhyme, her little brother Nigel Hob Nob, was too young to do anything other than dribble. At least that's what Nina thought.

One afternoon, when Daddy Hob Nob came back from collecting nettles, Nina Hob Nob, said, "Daddy can I go and play — if I don't go too far away?"

"Off you pop, then — be good," said her Daddy.

So Nina Hob Nob went out looking for adventure. She skipped around the nettles, and hoped over the tiny weeds, then played hop scotch on the tiny pebbles along the path.

She had decided that she would go looking for treasure, so she got a small leaf and made it into a bag. She found all sorts which the big people had left behind, she found a big safety pin, and an earring which was very big indeed.

"Oh boy what fun, I'll take this home to mum," she laughed to herself and skipped off down nettle path and headed for home. Just then she heard a strange cry, it was coming from underneath a nettle. Being a little cautious she went over to the 'noise' she gently pulled the nettle back, and there lying on the ground was a funny old man, with his leg in a funny position.

"Whatever have you done?" said a surprised Nina.

"Well, I was chasing

butterflies, and I slipped and fell, and my leg hurts" wailed the funny old man.

Well Nina told the old man that she would rush home and get her daddy to help, and some of her mummy's nettle soup, for the pain.

She ran as fast as she could, with her bag of treasures tightly in her hand. She found her daddy cleaning the outside of the shoe.

She told him what had happened and ran in to the shoe to tell her mummy what had happened and to get some nettle soup.

By the time Nina had got back to the old man, her father was already putting on a splint, to hold his leg in place, so they could get him to the doctor who lived not too far away, luckily for the old man.

Doctor Dibbs said that the bone was not broken, just a sprain.

They watched the two men unload the big old clock and bring it into the house, and put it back in the correct place. The two mice jumped up and down with excitement.

"Not long now, and we'll have our home back," said Cheese.

"I think every one has left from the hall now, so we can go in," said Crackers.

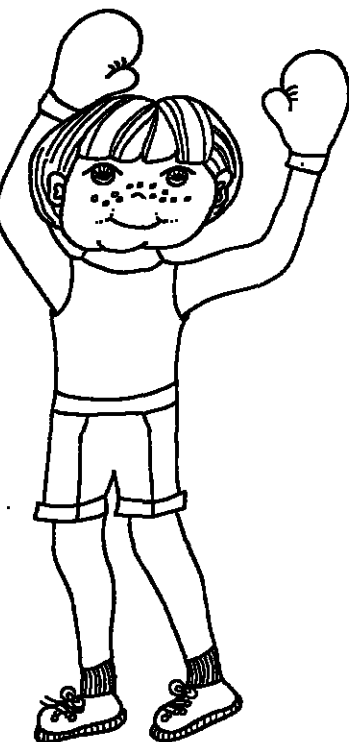
After they checked the coast was clear, they thanked the floor board family and set off to 'their' clock.

It was so nice to be home again, and most important, they could hear the beautiful sound of the clock going Tick Tock.

Boxing Through Subtraction

Circle the right answer.

- 14 - 4 = 10 11
- 12 - 2 = 10 11
- 17 - 8 = 9 10
- 16 - 9 = 7 8
- 15 - 7 = 7 8
- 14 - 8 = 6 7
- 12 - 5 = 6 7
- 13 - 8 = 5 6
- 15 - 9 = 5 6
- 17 - 9 = 8 9
- 16 - 9 = 8 9
- 12 - 5 = 7 8
- 11 - 4 = 7 8
- 13 - 3 = 9 10
- 15 - 5 = 9 10
- 14 - 9 = 5 6
- 13 - 7 = 5 6
- 16 - 8 = 8 9



Birthday Coupon

Is your birthday to come soon?
Are you a regular reader of the Junior Times?
Well, now is the chance to let your friends know that it is your birthday!
Or maybe you would like to surprise your best friend, brother or sister by putting their picture in for them.
The details we need are:

Name:
Date of birth:
School:
Hobbies:
Telephone:
(confidential)

Your favourite most recent picture (4x6)

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ARAB TIMES
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P.O. Box 2270
13023, Safat,
Kuwait
To avoid delayed greetings please send within a week before the special date

MARKETPLACE

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Chesnokov overcomes Hogstedt

Jonsson stretches Sanchez



Sanchez: made to fight for win

WELLINGTON, New Zealand, Jan 3, (AP): Top seeds Emilio Sanchez and Andrei Chesnokov encountered stiff Swedish opposition today, but both advanced to the quarterfinals of the \$150,000 BP Nationals Tennis Championship.

Sanchez of Spain defeated Lars Jonsson 4-6, 6-3, 7-5, while second-seeded Chesnokov of the Soviet Union struggled past another Swede, Thomas Hogstedt, 7-6, 7-6.

Fifth seed Paolo Cane of Italy and eighth seeded Richey Renberg of the United States also advanced with second round wins in the 32-draw event, first on the New Association of Tennis Professionals Tour.

Cane downed New Zealander Bruce Derlin 6-4, 7-6, while Renberg beat yet another Swede, Christian Bergstrom 6-4, 6-3.

Promising young Australian Richard Fromberg scored the only upset on the third day, ousting seventh-seeded Paul Chamierlin 6-3, 6-4 of the United States.

Also advancing were Gilad Bloom of Israel, Karel Novacek of Czechoslovakia and first round giant-killer Lars Wahlgren, the only Swedish survivor.

Wahlgren, who beat defending champion Kelly Evernden of New Zealand in the first round,

bested Jeremy Bates of Britain 6-4, 6-7, 6-3.

Bloom beat Veli Paloheimo of Finland 6-4, 4-6, 6-4 in a protracted struggle, while Novacek ousted Swedish-born Australian Johan Anderson 6-3, 4-6, 6-3.

Only two quarterfinal matches are scheduled for tomorrow. Chesnokov will play Reneberg in the centre court opener with Novacek then facing Wahlgren. Matches pitting Sanchez against Fromberg and Bloom against Cane are to be played Friday.

The tournament continues through Sunday. And in Brisbane, second-seeded Jana Novotna breezed into the quarterfinals of the \$150,000 Danone Queensland Open today with a 6-3, 6-0 win over Australian Michelle Jagard.

The powerful Czechoslovak player, currently ranked 11th in the world, is aiming for a top five spot by the end of the year.

"I'm not totally happy with the way I'm playing. I still lack a little consistency, but I'm feeling really fit," Novotna said. "I'm being coached by Betty Stove and Mike Estep and hitting with Hana Mandlikova as part of a team and I'm feeling the benefits."

Novotna was joined in the last eight of the 56-draw tournament

by unseeded Japanese teenager Kimiko Date.

Date, 19, upset her second seed of the event by beating 15th seeded American Terry Phelps 6-1, 6-2. She downed fourth seeded Ros Fairbank in the second round yesterday.

Three seeded players — 10th seeded Judith Wiesner of Austria, 14th seeded Isabelle Demongeot of France and 16th seeded Kathy Rinaldi of the United States — scored second round wins.

But 12th seeded Regina Rajchrtova of Czechoslovakia was eliminated by Australian teenager Kristin Godridge.

Godridge, 16, outlasted Rajchrtova 4-6, 6-2, 6-0 in sweltering conditions.

Demongeot defeated Australian Renae Stubbs 7-6 (8-6), 6-3, while Rinaldi battled past Maya Kidwaki of Japan 6-2, 4-6, 6-4. Wiesner ousted American Carrie Cunningham 6-2, 5-6, 6-4.

Big-serving Brenda Schultz of the Netherlands also progressed to the third round with a 4-6, 6-3, 6-3 win over Australian Kristine Radford, a late replacement for third seeded Belinda Cordwell of New Zealand, who withdrew with an ankle injury.

Top-seeded Helena Sukova of Czechoslovakia was inactive today.



Becker: seeking No. 1 spot

Players slam Open surface

Becker confident

SYDNEY, Jan 3, (Reuters): The artificial rubberised court surface used for the Australian Open came under fire today from players worried they could be fried alive if a heatwave hits the National Tennis Centre later this month.

John Fitzgerald said conditions at the Australian Hardcourt Championships, played on the same rebound ace surface used at the Open, were life-threatening because of temperatures of around 40 degrees Celsius (104 Fahrenheit).

"If it rained, we'd come off. Yet we go and play in those conditions," the Australian said after his first round victory over Belgian qualifier Xavier Dufresne.

"What if a guy died out there? Some of the guys were talking in the locker room and said officials should make an urgent review of conditions," he told journalists.

The court surface reached 60 degrees Celsius (140 Fahrenheit) in Adelaide, causing five ball girls and boys to faint.

The bowl-like centre court at the National Tennis Centre, which hosts the Open from January 15 to 28, can become unbearably hot in bright sun which reflects off the surface and the concrete surrounds.

Last year world number one Ivan Lendl of Czechoslovakia was close to collapse after a marathon semifinal played in hot sun on centre court against Austrian Thomas Muster.

Sweden's Mats Wilander was one of many players who suggested the roof on the centre court should be closed if conditions became dangerously hot, an idea which organisers Tennis Australia are now considering.

At present the roof is only closed to keep out the rain. Tennis Australia president Geoff Pollard told journalists the retractable roof could be closed during the final four days of the Open when the men's and women's singles semifinals and finals would be played.

"We can't do it any earlier because there will be matches taking place on outside courts as well and it would not be fair," Pollard said.

As far as I am aware rebound ace is no hotter than other hardcourt surfaces. Naturally we want to ensure the players are not hurt by excessive heat and there are plenty of medical staff who will be on stand-by."

The complaints against the rebound ace surface comes just days after John McEnroe repeated the frequent complaint that the Open's timing is soon after the Christmas break will continue to hit its standing as a Grand Slam tournament.

"The Open is not anywhere near the standard of the other three Grand Slam events — a lot of top ranked players don't want to come," the American said in Perth after the Hopman Cup mixed team tennis tournament.

"It is just so difficult to come back to tennis at a top level after Christmas."

Eight of the world's top 20 men players are by-passing the Open but Lendl, world number two Boris Becker of West Germany, third-ranked Stefan Edberg of Sweden and McEnroe, ranked fourth, will be competing.

Becker braved the midday sun today, taking to the practice court just 12 hours after jetting into Australia from Europe to begin preparing for the Open.

Becker will play in the New South Wales Open at White City from Monday to prepare for the Open.

Becker last month led West Germany to victory over Sweden in the Davis Cup final and said he was feeling confident about 1990.

"I don't know what is going to happen in the future, but my aim is to win as many matches as possible," the West German said today when asked about the possibility of taking the world No. 1 ranking from Lendl.

"If I play well then we will see. Right now I feel good, although it is very hot today," Becker said.

Temperatures soared but that didn't stop coach Bob Brett from giving Becker a vigorous workout.

"It will take a couple of days to get adjusted to the conditions and the courts, so for me the Sydney tournament is a good preparation," Becker said.

BOXING

Tyson set to fight Holyfield in June

NEW YORK, Jan 3 (AP): Mike Tyson and Evander Holyfield are expected to sign contracts by next week for a June 18 bout that could pay the two heavyweights a record total of \$40 million, representatives of both sides said yesterday.

If the fight generates as much money as promoters hope, champion Tyson could earn \$25 million and No. 1 challenger Holyfield \$15 million in a battle of unbeaten.

Holyfield's promoters Shelly Finkel and Dan Duva planned to fly today or tomorrow to Las Vegas, Nevada, to meet with Tyson's promoter Don King. The sides hope to sign the contracts before Tyson leaves next week for Tokyo, where he will defend his title Feb 11 against Buster Douglas.

"We're very close," said Finkel, who has been negotiating with King for two weeks to put together the pay-per-view and closed circuit TV bout. "It will probably happen next week."

"There are just some terms that aren't important left to settle."

Trump Plaza Hotel and Casino in Atlantic City, N.J., and the Mirage and Caesars Palace in Las Vegas, Nev., are interested in staging the fight and the casino that wins the bidding will probably pay at least a \$11 million site fee. A Japanese group is also interested in holding the bout.

King's boxing director Al Braverman confirmed negotiations are running smoothly for the fight. "Talks are going well, Don and Shelly are pretty confident," Braverman said. "Holyfield's the best (challenger) out there."

Tyson would be heavily favoured over Holyfield, perhaps by as much as 7-1 in the opening line.

Tyson, 37-0 with 33 knockouts, last defended his title with a 93-second knockout of Carl The Truitt Williams July in Atlantic City. Holyfield's last fight was an eighth-round knockout of Alex Stewart Nov 4. Holyfield, 23-0 with 19 knockouts, was undisputed cruiserweight champion before moving up to the heavyweight ranks 18 months ago.

Holyfield, of Atlanta, stopped all five of his heavyweight opponents. The Tyson bout would be his biggest payday by far.

Tyson, a 23-year-old New Yorker, would also likely earn a career high. He made around \$22 million — the largest individual purse in boxing history — for a 91-second knockout of Michael Spinks in June 1987. Spinks earned \$13.5 million in the bout which also set the record for boxers' combined purse.

Donald Trump is the favourite to land the bout in his Atlantic City casino. Prior agreements with both fighters' camps give him the right to make the first offer and match any higher bid. Steve Wynn, owner of the month-old Mirage, has said he will not pay more than \$10 million for Tyson-Holyfield.

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NFL ROUNDUP

Steelers confident of beating Broncos

PITTSBURGH, Jan 3, (AP): As they prepare for Sunday's American Conference playoff game in Denver — an amazing development in its own right — don't remind the Pittsburgh Steelers that the Broncos beat them 34-7 on Nov 5.

The Steelers' attitude is "We're confident of beating the Broncos."

The game seems so long ago, their 4-6 record at the time seems just so much ancient history, that the Steelers can hardly believe they're the same team. And they're not, running back Tim Worley said.

"We're a whole different team than we were two months ago," Worley said yesterday. "Look at us now and look at us back then. We couldn't beat anybody back then. But we're confident now and we're all playing together. We're on a roll."

Yeah, just look at them now. The same team that was outscored 92-10 in its first two games is on its first four-game winning streak since 1983, has won six of its last seven, and, quarterback Bobby Brister said, "We'll play anybody anywhere right now."

Even at Houston, where they upset the Oilers 26-23 in overtime in the AFC wild-card playoff game Sunday after losing there earlier, 27-0. Even at Denver, where they haven't played since upsetting the Broncos 24-17 in a 1984 playoff game.

"We're playing our best ball now... just when you need to be playing your best ball," fullback Merrill Hoge said.

The fact that they're eight-point underdogs for the second consecutive week hardly matters to the Steelers because, as Brister said: "We probably won't get any respect until we go to the Super Bowl."

"We've been underdogs all year and nobody expected us to do anything, so that's good," Brister said. "We're pretty confident, and it doesn't make any difference who we play or where we play."

For the second week in a row, the Steelers have momentum in their favour. Houston was on a downer before playing Pittsburgh, having lost two in a row. Denver (11-5) has lost three of four, although Steelers coach Chuck Noll downplays that because the Broncos clinched the AFC West title three weeks ago.

"After you clinch, that takes the edge off your game," Noll said. "You can't put too much confidence in that. These are the playoffs."

You don't have to remind the Steelers of that, since three-quarters of their roster had no playoff experience, and cornerback Dwayne Woodruff is the last remaining veteran from their 1990 Super Bowl championship team.

"After we won that playoff game (in Houston), we were on cloud nine," Tackle Tunch Ilkin said. "Once you're in the playoffs, things can happen, because there's a hop, skip and a jump to the Super Bowl. We're confident we'll overcome a great deal of adversity. We have a great feeling right now."

Lewis-Johnson race being planned

RALEIGH, N.C., Jan 3, (Reuters): Carl Lewis' business manager said yesterday he was discussing the possibility with at least six groups of a multi-million-dollar race in September between the two-time US Olympic and disgraced Canadian sprinter Ben Johnson.

"The lowest offer — and the latest round — has been \$1 million for Carl and the highest has been \$6 million," Joe Douglas, Lewis' business agent, told Reuters by telephone from California. "But I don't know how substantial any of the offers are."

Three of the groups are from the United States, two from Spain and one from the Netherlands, he said. The race could gross more than \$10 million, Douglas said he had been told.

"It would be the event of the year," he said. The rematch probably would take place a few days after Johnson regains his eligibility on September 25, Douglas said.

Johnson, who was suspended for two years by the International Amateur Athletic Federation (IAAF) after testing positive for steroids at the 1988 race, was also stripped of his gold medal and will lose the 100 metres world record, which he set in 1987, to Lewis later this month because of admitted drug use.

Lewis won four gold medals in the 1984 Olympics and successfully defended his titles in the 100 metres and long jump at the 1988 Games.

Talks continue over where the race will be held, Douglas said.

"As far as viewing the race (on television) in the States, Japan would be a good market and North America would be a good place," he said. "I don't know if the Johnson people would want it in America, but I would. Europe would be my third choice. But you go where the best situation is. Wherever they have it, so long as it is promoted well."

British Daily Express reported last month that US boxing promoter Bob Arum had lined up a \$3.2 million race between Johnson and Lewis for Barcelona, Spain, for September 25. But Douglas said he had not spoken to Arum.

"I am having discussions with a US boxing promoter, but it is not Arum," Douglas said. He identified the two other US groups as marketing companies and said one of the Spanish groups is from Seville and the other from Barcelona. He would not identify any of the groups by name.

Douglas said talks also were taking place with people who worked for a US television company.

"We would definitely want to bring in Pay-per-view (cable) television," he said.

At least five or six athletes would be involved in the 100 metre race, Douglas said. "And wherever it is held, I don't want it to be a side show or a circus," Douglas said. "I want it to be a great track event with more than one race. I think we should also have a 200, 400 and perhaps 800 (metres) for men and women."

Montana, the all-time NFL in quarterback rating (94.0) and completion percentage (63.9 per cent), is a two-time Super Bowl MVP and was an overwhelming choice this fall as AP pro football Player of the Decade. But despite six selections to the pro bowl, five as the NFL starter, and a previous NFL passing title in 1987, he had never been the League MVP.

"It's a great honour," Montana said at the 49ers' training camp in Santa Clara, where the team is preparing for Saturday's home playoff game with Minnesota. "There were a lot of players around the league who had good seasons, and to be singled out is rewarding."

The 49ers, who led the League in total offense in 1987 and 1989 and were second last season, have had a monopoly on offensive Players of the Year honours for three years. Jerry Rice was MVP and offensive player in 1987 and Roger Craig was selected for the offensive award last season.

"A lot of the credit for my success goes to my teammates. Jerry, John Taylor and Roger and the line all had great years as well as the entire offense, which made my job a lot easier," Montana said. "Without them I would not have been able to have the type of season that I'm having."

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Three years after undergoing major back surgery and a year after his starting job was put up for grabs by Bill Walsh, Montana at age 33 guided the San Francisco 49ers to four fourth-quarter comeback wins and the League's best record (14-2). He had a sixth season of 3,000-plus passing yards, tying Dan Fouts' League record, and at one point threw 150 passes without an interception.

Montana, completing a near-record 70.2 per cent of his passes for 26 touchdowns and a career-low eight interceptions, also was an easy winner of the AP's Offensive Player of the Year award.

In balloting by a national media panel, Montana received 62 votes for MVP. Green Bay quarterback Don Majkowski was a distant second with 6. The only other vote-getter was defensive tackle Keith Millard of Minnesota with 2.

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September 25. But Douglas said he had not spoken to Arum.

"I am having discussions with a US boxing promoter, but it is not Arum," Douglas said. He identified the two other US groups as marketing companies and said one of the Spanish groups is from Seville and the other from Barcelona. He would not identify any of the groups by name.

Douglas said talks also were taking place with people who worked for a US television company.

"We would definitely want to bring in Pay-per-view (cable) television," he said.

At least five or six athletes would be involved in the 100 metre race, Douglas said. "And wherever it is held, I don't want it to be a side show or a circus," Douglas said. "I want it to be a great track event with more than one race. I think we should also have a 200, 400 and perhaps 800 (metres) for men and women."

Pakistani batting collapses

Aussies score easy win

Bhutto Trophy

NEW PAK Cricket Club meet Quaid-e-Millat in the final of the Bhutto Memorial Trophy at the Kheitan Ground tomorrow. The match will start at 9.00 am and Haji Mohammed Afzal Noor, the chairman of the Pakistan Peoples Club, will be the chief guest.

Bulgaria win

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates, Jan 3. (AP): Bulgaria ended Iran's unbeaten record at the first World Youth Volleyball Championship with a hard-fought 3-0 victory yesterday.

Arias triumphs

ADELAIDE, Australia, Jan 3. (AP): Jimmy Arias of the United States upset fourth seeded Soviet player Alexander Volkov 6-4, 7-6 (7-3) today to storm into the quarterfinals of the \$150,000 Australian Hard-court Tennis Championships.

English club

LONDON, Jan 3. (Reuters): Ray Harford, who guided Luton to two League Cup final appearances in the past two seasons, parted company with the struggling English First Division soccer club today.

Pressman out

LONDON, Jan 3. (UPI): Sheffield Wednesday goalkeeper Kevin Pressman was yesterday ruled out for the rest of the season after undergoing surgery for ruptured knee ligaments. He was carried off after a 63rd minute collision with striker David Oldfield in Wednesday's 2-0 victory against Manchester City at Hillsborough on New Year's Day.

£1m midfielder

LONDON, Jan 3. (UPI): Gary McAllister, Leicester City's £1 million (\$1.5 million) rated Scottish midfielder who is wanted by a number of top clubs, yesterday insisted he wouldn't rush into a transfer.

Title fight

LONDON, Jan 3. (UPI): Glenn McCrory will meet Jeff Larkin of the US in his second defence of the IBF world cruiserweight title in March, it was announced today.

French motorcyclist

MARSEILLE, France, Jan 3. (UPI): Doctors said their prognosis on veteran French motorcyclist Pierre-Marie Poli was "very reserved" today because of head injuries that left him in a deep coma after a spill at high speed during the Paris-Dakar Rally.

Games chairman

AUCKLAND, New Zealand, Jan 3. (Reuters): The newly-appointed chairman of the Commonwealth Games Organisation, Sir Earl Richardson, was admitted to hospital on yesterday but officials said his illness would not affect the Games, which begin on Jan 24.

Stableford golf

THE annual Kuwait Stableford Golf Championship, sponsored by the Toyo Tyres (Abdullahi Al Mailem Trading Co.), will be held at the Hunting and Equestrian Golf Club on Jan 11 and 12. Maximum handicaps allowed is 20. Interested participants should send their entries to their respective clubs by Jan 5.

Italian Cup

ROME, Jan 3. (Reuters): Results in the third round of the Italian Soccer Cup today:

Group A		
Roma	3	Ascoli 0
Group B		
Bologna	3	Fiorentina 2
Group D		
Sampdoria	2	Pescara 1

RESULTS of the Hubera Centre Bridge Club game:

N/S
1. Bianca Moussali & Ahmed Tawil
Sharing second: Nabil Akel & S. Chaudhary and Dr Oskay & Mr. Moussali

E/W
1. Gajjar & Gawahir
2. Adel & El Baz
3. Lolli Murthwaite & Dona Materly

Kouros suffers problems again

KUWAIT'S Mishal Al Jarallah was a disappointed man after the Dubai Offshore Powerboat Race on Monday, January 1. Despite making it to ninth place and being the second Kuwaiti home, he felt that his Kouros-sponsored boat should have taken a better position.

"We've been having a lot of problems with the centre mounted engine," explained his thirtysomething cousin, Fernando, a competent marine mechanic. The 32-foot long Kouros Cougar Sportcat is powered by triple Mercury 2.4 e.f.i. engines, and has suffered persistent difficulties with the centre unit, although the engines to either side are working perfectly.

Cougar, the manufacturers of the boat, are trying to find a way around the problem, which saw the Kouros team fabricating a special duct to protect the centre propeller in Jordan. The aluminium boat is unique in its format, and a solution will require innovation rather than reliance on tried and tested methods.



Allan Border

MELBOURNE, Australia, Jan 3. (AP): Captain Allan Border hit an unbeaten 69 today as Australia cruised to a seven-wicket victory over Pakistan in a World Series Cup one-day cricket match at the Melbourne Cricket Ground.

Australia reached 162 for three in response to Pakistan's woeful 161 all out with a full nine overs to spare.

Border was named Man of the Match for his innings, while Steve Waugh contributed 31 in an 81-run partnership.

The Pakistanis were without vice-captain Javed Miandad, who was suffering from a virus, but batted poorly right down the order.

Australian pace bowler Carl Rackemann took three wickets for 21 and only captain Imran Khan resisted with stout-hearted 39.

Australia improved its record in the triangular tournament to 3-0. Sri Lanka is 1-2 and Pakistan 0-2.

Imran Khan won the toss and elected to bat but his batsmen had no answer to Rackemann and Merv Hughes, who bowled 10 overs at a cost of just 16 runs. Openers Shoaib Mohammed and Aamir Malik were able to

keep out the Australian attack but could not push on and score runs.

The pair laboured for more than 20 overs over an opening stand of 67.

Hughes bowled a superb opening spell of five overs for five runs and Rackemann conceded just 11 runs from his first seven overs. Shoaib wasted 58 deliveries on his 22 and Aamir used up a further 65 balls for his 23 before Rackemann disposed of both openers in his sixth over.

Aamir flicked at Rackemann and was brilliantly caught by wicketkeeper Ian Healy and then Shoaib was caught by Healy trying to glance.

Mansoor Akhtar provided some much-needed impetus in a 40-run stand with Imran but an ambitious sweep at spinner Peter Taylor ended his innings at 32 when he lost his off ball.

Imran was forced to anchor the innings, finishing with 39 in an hour and a half as wickets fell around him.

Ijaz Ahmed did not respond to Imran's call and was run out by David Boon and Boon later effected his second run out, hitting the stumps from long off to get rid of Maqsood Rana, son of umpire Shakoor Rana.

Scoreboard

PAKISTAN
Aamir Malik c Healy b Rackemann 23
Shoaib Mohammed c Healy b Rackemann 22
Mansoor Akhtar b Taylor 3
Saeed Anwar c Marsh b Taylor 3
Imran Khan c Hughes b O'Donnell 39
Ijaz Ahmed run out 3
Wasim Akram c Taylor b Rackemann 8
Abdul Qadir c Border b Alderman 1
Maqsood Rana run out 5
Nadeem Ghouri not out 7
Aaqib Javed run out 1
Extras (lb-8 w-6 nb-1) 17
Total (50 overs) 161

Fall of wickets: 1-56 2-59 3-67 4-107 5-115 6-136 7-138 8-148 9-156.
Bowling: Hughes 10-3-16-0, Alderman 10-2-31-1 (2w), Rackemann 10-2-21-3 (1nb), O'Donnell 9-0-43-1 (6w), Taylor 10-0-36-2, Waugh 1-0-6-0.

AUSTRALIA
D. Boon b Ghouri 39
G. Marsh c Aamir b Wasim 3
D. Jones b Aaqib 2
A. Border not out 69
S. Waugh not out 31
Extras (7b 8lb 2w 1nb) 18
Total 162 for three

Fall of wickets: 6, 17, 81.
Bowling: Wasim Akram 10-1-24-1 (1nb), Aaqib Javed 8-0-30-1 (2w), Maqsood Rana 2-0-11-0, Imran Khan 7-0-29-0, Nadeem Ghouri 10-3-30-1, Abdul Qadir 4-0-23-0.
Batting time: 164 minutes. Overs 41. Attendance 52,813.

Suns beat Knicks at home

NEW YORK, Jan 3. (AP): Kevin Johnson scored 11 of his 26 points in the fourth quarter as the Phoenix Suns snapped New York's nine-game winning streak with a 113-99 victory and became the first team to beat the Knicks at home this season.

Eddie Johnson scored 22 points and Jeff Hornacek 20 last night for the Suns, who have won three of four road games after losing their first seven away from home this season.

Bullets 110, Nets 96
Jeff Malone scored 23 points, Bernard King had 20 and Mel Turpin chipped in with 14 in his first start of the season as the Bullets broke a five-game losing streak with a 110-96 victory over New Jersey.

The Bullets, who got 13 points from Malone in the opening

period, led 35-18 after one quarter and stayed comfortably in front the rest of the way. New Jersey has lost three straight and six of its last seven.

Clippers 87, Timberwolves 79
Charles Smith hit two straight baskets to break a late tie and the Clippers won their first road game after 10 losses, 87-79.

Minnesota, which has lost 12 of its last 13 games, scored a team record-low 30 second-half points. The Expansion club's only offensive threat was Tony Campbell, who scored 31.

Pistons 115, Magic 113
Bill Laimbeer had 26 points and Detroit scored 15 of its last 17 points from the free-throw line. Laimbeer scored 14 points in the second half and had the only field goal in the last six minutes for the NBA champions in a

RESULTS

Atlanta	113	Milwaukee	107
Detroit	115	Orlando	113
Washington	110	New Jersey	96
L.A. Clippers	87	Minnesota	79
Phoenix	113	New York	99
Dallas	110	Indiana	106
Golden State	133	Utah	120
Portland	119	Miami	95

Hain warns rebels of 'explosive situation'

LONDON, Jan 3. (Reuters): A leading anti-apartheid campaigner has warned the England cricket rebels they face a "potentially explosive situation" and disturbances similar to the anti-apartheid protests in England 20 years ago when they began their tour of South Africa later this month.

Peter Hain, organiser of the 1969-70 protests against a South African tour to Britain, has written to rebel tour captain Mike Gatting following a fact-finding trip to the republic.

Urging the players to call off their controversial tour, Hain writes: "You and your colleagues may be completely unaware of the potentially explosive situation which will greet you."

After pointing out that black cricketers and officials were opposed to the tour, Hain says

they can "expect to be dogged by demonstrations," similar to those which forced the cancellation of the 1970 South African tour.

He adds: "From my findings and discussions it is quite clear that there is a real threat to the tour and possibly to the safety of your team."

"In response the government and police will offer you full protection. I am quite certain the only way protesters will be held at bay is by surrounding the grounds with police and placing a police barrier between the spectators inside and the police. The dignity of the game will be irrevocably damaged."

Hain says protesters might be injured "or even killed," as a result of the police action.

The itinerary for the tour has yet to be released.

IOC to meet S. Africans

LONDON, Jan 3. (AP): The first step towards ending South Africa's 20-year isolation in international sports will be taken next week when the country's white-dominated National Olympic Committee meets with International Olympic Committee advisers.

After years of lobbying but no formal talks, members of the South African National Olympic Committee will sit down with officials of the IOC's commission for apartheid in Paris next Tuesday.

An IOC adviser described the talks today as preliminary discussions aimed at resuming official links between South Africa and world sports. He said there was still a long way to go before sports boycotts against the racially separated country were reduced or eliminated.

The IOC expelled South Africa in 1970 because of its policies of racial discrimination and their impact on sports. Since then, South Africa has been barred by almost every major international sports federation.

"The circumstances in South Africa are changing," said Sam Ramsamy, one of two members of the IOC commission attending the Paris meeting.

Flying Arrows, Cosmos triumph

COSMOS and Flying Arrows beat Starworld and Al Hilal respectively on penalty strokes in the Frankie Memorial Cup hockey tournament at the Alhambra grounds earlier this week.

Pak XI and Unity were awarded walkovers in the Al Mulla and Al Hilal tournaments when Kuwait Independents Gold and Black failed to turn up. Tomorrow Flying Arrows meet Al Hilal at 2.00 pm. Unity take on Kuwait Independents Gold at 3.00 pm and Cosmos tackle Kuwait Independent Black at 3.00 pm.



Chess tourney

THE prize distribution ceremony of the Sheikh Sabah Al Salem Memorial Chess Tournament was late Tuesday evening at the SAS Hotel.

The championship, which concluded earlier on the same day, was held under the patronage of the Interior Minister Sheikh Salem Al Sabah, who deputised Sheikh Bader Sabah Al Salem to attend the prize distribution on his behalf.

The prize distribution ceremony was also attended by the Social Affairs and Labour Ministry Undersecretary for Youth Affairs, Abdul Rahman Al Mazroui.

Above: the winners with the tournament officials and the chief guest.

Right: two of the winners receive their prizes from Sheikh Bader Al Sabah Al Salem. (Photos by Javed Basra)

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